

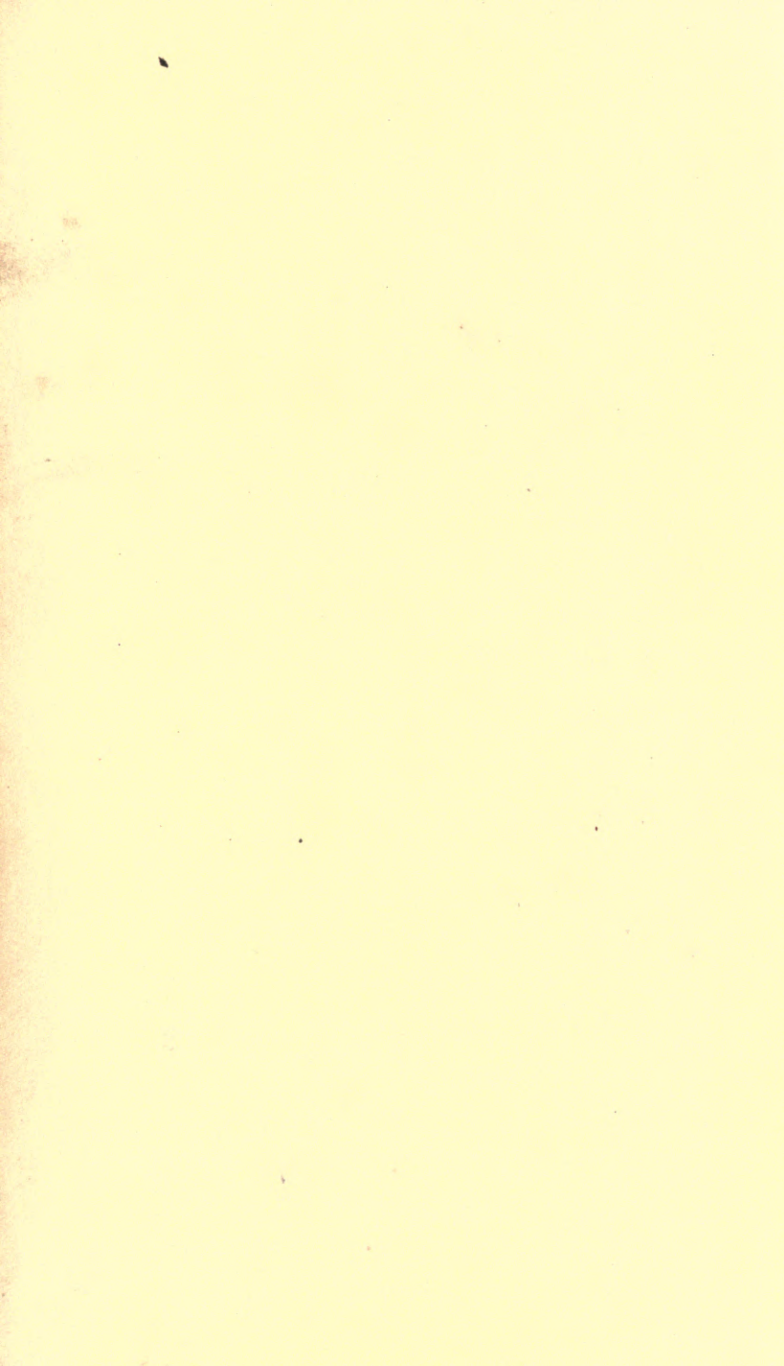




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Drawn by S. Smith, from a Sketch by E. Lees.

S. RIV. SC.

THE ELYANGE STACK,
Pembrokeshire, South Wales,
The Habitat of the Sea Mallow (*Lavatera arborea*).

THE
BOTANICAL LOOKER-OUT
AMONG THE
WILD FLOWERS
OF THE
FIELDS, WOODS, AND MOUNTAINS,
OF
ENGLAND AND WALES;
FORMING A FAMILIAR
MONTHLY GUIDE for the COLLECTING BOTANIST.
INTERSPERSED WITH
PICTORIAL GLANCES, BOTANIZING INCIDENTS,
AND NOTICES OF MANY
REMARKABLE LOCALITIES OF THE RARER AND MOST
INTERESTING ENGLISH AND WELSH PLANTS.

BY EDWIN LEES, F.L.S.,

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SOCIETY OF LONDON, ETC., FORMERLY HONORARY CURATOR OF
THE WORCESTERSHIRE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

——— "Hours of relaxation so agreeably employed in Botanical
Rambles, with a numerous train of friends, then ardent and curious like
myself."

SIR J. E. SMITH, IN ENGLISH BOTANY.

LONDON:
TILT AND BOGUE, FLEET-STREET;
AND
H. DAVIES, CHELTENHAM.
1842.



"The only way to become Naturalists, in the most pleasing sense of the term, is to observe the habits of the plants and animals that we see around us, not so much with a view of finding out what is uncommon, as of being well acquainted with that which is of every-day occurrence. Nor is this a task of difficulty or one of dull routine. Every change of elevation, of exposure, is accompanied by a variation both in plants and in animals; and every season and week, nay almost every day, brings something new; so that while the Book of Nature is more accessible and more easily read than the books of the library, it is at the same time more varied. In whatever place, or at whatever time, one may be disposed to take a walk, in the most sublime scenes or the bleakest wastes; on arid downs, or on the margins of rivers and lakes; inland or by the sea shore; in the wild or on the cultivated ground; and in all kinds of weather and all seasons of the year, Nature is open to our enquiry."

THE BRITISH NATURALIST.



TO THOSE
FRIENDS AND COMPANIONS
WITH WHOM I HAVE ENJOYED
THE DELIGHTS
OF
BOTANICAL EXPLORATION
IN MANY AN EXCURSION,
FREE FROM THE PETTY FEELINGS
OF ENVY AND JEALOUSY
KNOWN ONLY TO LITTLE MINDS,
AND WHO WILL UNDERSTAND THE FEELINGS
WITH WHICH THIS VOLUME WAS WRITTEN,
IT IS NOW INSCRIBED
AS A MEMORIAL
OF PAST JOYS.

2090838

PREFACE.

I WILL admit *in limine* that I am not here writing to instruct the professional student of Botany. Neither do I aim to surprise my brother botanists by any new arrangements in classification or discoveries in physiology. But if I take a humbler rank than the dignity of science may seem to warrant, and thus make no advances in their estimation, still I hope I may be in some degree *useful* in attracting the *many* to the pleasures afforded by an examination of plants in their wild localities, and thus, indirectly at least, subserve the cause of Natural History, by enlisting recruits, whose enthusiasm may perchance be awakened by my incitations to observation and adventure.

In my experience as a practical collecting botanist for some years, I have invariably found that however my botanical friends might take fire at the exhibition of my specimens or the mention of their habitats, that the uninitiated in these things were unable to comprehend the sources of my pleasure, and could not understand on what principle I could experience delight in making long journies, and taking fatiguing rambles,

merely in search of plants. On the other hand, Botany forming no part of general education even at the present moment, I have very often met with ladies and gentlemen of highly cultivated understandings, open to all the charms which the beauties of external nature ever exercises upon sensitive minds—who, perhaps, fully understood the motions and orbits of the planets, and knew their relative distances, their satellites, and their atmospheres, and could even speculate on the constitution of their inhabitants, while the plants beneath their feet, on their own earth, were unknown and almost entirely unregarded. Thus fully realizing the old fable of the Grecian sages, who journeyed to the moon, and returned without examining a tittle of its productions, except the smoking viands that the hospitality of the inhabitants had placed before them! This neglect of physical and mental enjoyment lying within the reach of almost every body, appears to me to arise from a false supposition that the toils attendant upon the study of Botany would greatly counterbalance any pleasure to be derived from it. In these papers, then, I aim to show how incorrect such a conclusion is;—and, in monthly order, my object has been to produce delineations which, even to the general eye of those unfamiliar with botanical terms, shall offer charms which may tempt the leisure of those who desire a pleasing and instructive occupa-

tion; while I have introduced *incident* to show that the botanist during his rambles may still look out with all the gusto of a traveller superadded to his scientific examinations—while the stores of his collecting-book will make “a wet day at an inn” very different from “the wet day” so graphically described by Washington Irving.

It unfortunately happens that the majority of botanical works contemplate instructing pupils determined to be *professionally* devoted to the study they develope; but as comparatively few non-medical persons contemplate such an entire dedication of their time as this supposes, they soon shrink from the armed array of technicalities that they see enclosing them around, and give up the attack in despair—finding, as in the old editions of Æsop’s Fables, that “*the moral*” is so lengthy when compared with the tale. Other “Introductions” throw down their sugared lumps for the mere child, forgetting that the child, if a student of botany at all, requires not this “gilding of refined gold,” or “painting the lily,”—the zest of occupation and wandering abroad being a sufficient stimulus for *him*. It is the adult, never led to think of Botany in his youth, that requires to be *tempted*, and this can be only done by pointing out the *pleasure* and *satisfaction* resulting from a personal examination of

“Every herb that sips the morning dew.”

I therefore claim to be on the *recruiting service*, and with this special object in view, amid "the world of light, and dews, and summer airs," I have brought together from the woods, meads, and mountains, those delicate gems that seemed best suited for the purpose I had in view—

"Beneath the trees I sat

Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played."*

Treating the subject thus lightly, I may hope to attract some whose attention would shrink from the study of more laboured treatises—and the ardent enquirer, if he accompanies me for *excitement*, will find abundant works before the public, where the sparks here kindled, may contribute fuel to the *continuation* and *duration* of the scientific flame he desires to nourish with increasing and perennial vigour. Even the proficient in botanical study may not be displeased with the allusions made to the *habitats* of some of his favourites; since as iron sharpeneth iron, so is enterprise awakened by the narration of the humblest pilgrim to the shrine that is the object of the reverence of his fraternity.

It may be necessary to say, that this Work appeared originally in detached pieces, in the pages of the *Cheltenham Looker-On*, whence, without authority, several articles were copied into London and Pro-

* Wordsworth.

vincial Periodicals. This spoliation seemed to imply something worth taking, and hence I have *revised*, *corrected*, and *greatly enlarged* the original papers, as well as *added others*; and placed them as they now appear, in the hope that they may incite many, who may have leisure to do so, to commence botanical rambles, and find the same enjoyment in them that I have done. Science, poetry, and adventure, may all be united in the investigation of the “garniture of fields.”

FORTHAMPTON COTTAGE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE,

May, 1840.

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WILD FLOWERS OF JANUARY.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION—FLOWERS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO THE HUMAN RACE—FIRST ASPECT OF THE YEAR—EVERGREENS—IVY AND HOLLY CONTRASTED—NATURAL HISTORY OF THE MISTLETOE—ITS STATIONS ON VARIOUS TREES.

“ Winter is here—all the flowers are dead,
No nosegay is gracing the room ;
But *coral* and *pearls* of rare lustre are spread
In the *Holly* and *Mistletoe* bloom.”

E. COOKE.

GROVES, GARDENS, AND WILD-FLOWERS—on these blissful concomitants of the country we purpose to dilate through the varying phases of the changeful months. We shall trace the opening buds disclosed by each week in succession, whether on the mountain, the plain, or the surgy margin of ocean ; we shall pierce the intricacies of the solemn twilight grove, whether decked with the ermine ruff of winter, or robed in the umbrageous multitude of leaves that sprightly summer exhibits to view ; and we shall gaze upon the gems of the garden as in turn they glow before the solar rays, with all the ardour of poetical excitement. Thus the

floral wreath we now present, will, we trust, have charms for all gazers, since we propose to render it of general interest by the variety of its tints and shades; and if our course be sometimes *erratic*, we still hope to tempt the lovers of nature to join us in our pilgrimage, while our indications will, at all times, be useful to the practical botanist, in whatever part of the year our pages may be consulted.

Flowers are almost the first objects that delight the infant sight, and permanently impress the memory—

“ We but begin to live from that fine point
Which Memory dwells on with the morning star,
The earliest note we heard the Cuckoo sing,
Or the *first Daisy that we ever pluck'd*;
When thoughts themselves were stars, and birds, and
flowers!”*

So we may trace them in idea as decking and adorning every path of life—on the brow of the smiling bride—in the path of the conqueror—in the last sad grasp of the withered senior—and brought of old as an emblematical offering to the altars of the gods.

“ Floribus et vino Genium memorem brevis ævi.”†

So to the Genius of the changing hours,
Mindful of life's short date, they offered wine and *flowers*.

But the more particular aspect of the *first month of the year* now claims to be examined and recorded, although, perhaps, an uninitiated enquirer might ask—What, by any possibility, can the botanical explorer do in the month of January? All the dull, gloomy, and horrific epithets language can furnish

* James Montgomery.

† Horace, Epist. lib. ii. l. 144.

may be justifiably heaped upon this dreary portion of the year: to look *on* a cheerless, leafless, lifeless, damp, and foggy landscape—even from between one's drawing-room curtains—is bad enough; but to go *out* into it, is unendurable. Surely this look-out may be fairly postponed for a month or two, or, at all events, its glories may be summed up in this one expressive line of the poet of "The Seasons:"—

"How *dead* the Vegetable Kingdom lies."

Dead indeed! and, unless my eyes deceive me, buried too; for I see something uncommonly like snow upon the meadows, or, if it be not there now, I may safely prophesy (without Murphy's aid) that it *will* be there before the month has reached its termination. But surely something may even now be looked at; and most certainly, if *evergreens* are *ever* beautiful, it must be at this denuded season, when their aid in the shrubbery and the landscape is the only redeeming feature that presents itself. Hence the *evergreens* now so prominently visible in gardens and plantations, have been thus allegorically distributed in the following lines of a poem consecrated to this early portion of the reign of two-faced Janus—

————— "O'er the lover

I'll shake the *berry'd missletoe*, that he
May long remember Christmas; to the son
Of boasting war, I'll give the *holly-leaf*,
And its *red berries*; such he'll find its meed,
A little show of pomp, and many thorns.
I'll give the poet *ivy*; for, like it,
Around the ruin'd pile he ever clings,
Adorns the loneliest spot with fancy's charms,
And props the tott'ring column in his rhymes,
I'll give the scholar *fir*; for he must be

Like it for ever green, erect, and firm,
 And with his needles of philosophy
 Contemn the snows of life. Here's darkling *yew*,
 The mourner must have that, who seeks the shade,
 And hides his melancholy head in caves,
 Or by the sandy beach, utt'ring aloud
 His dull soliloquies, unseen, unknown.
 Here's *laurel* for the school-boy."*

How beautiful now the various firs, cypresses, and cedars;—how imposing the lonely though sepulchral *yew* in its frondal magnificence;—how reviving the *laurel*, *laurustinus*, bay, holly, ivy, and even mistletoe, high nestled up among the trees with its milk-white berries. The latter requires *experimental* illustration, and therefore I shall now say no more about it, than that I have just been taking a cursory view of a very fine specimen, to which I took the opportunity of escorting a fair maiden to expound a first botanical lesson, which I have some faint hope may remain for a season *imprinted* on her recollection. But let me say a word about *ivy*, for the present is the only fair chance to mention it—at least with full justice—when, as now, it is in its acmé of beauty and luxuriance. Notwithstanding its green aspect about trees and buildings at a season when every leaf is an acquisition, modern associations are not so brilliant with regard to *ivy* as ancient ones were, when, at the sight of its coronals, man, woman, and child grew mad with delight, and shouted “Io BACCHUS!”

“Oh! how could fancy crown with *thee*,
 In ancient times the God of Wine,
 And bid thee at the banquet be
 Companion of the vine?”

* Christmas; a Masque for the Fire Side.

Our ideas revert involuntary to the desolate ruin where the ivy encompasses the tempest-riven towers with its hundred Briarean arms, or waves darkly and mournfully about the broken tracery of the windows of many a crumbling abbey and priory. Good wine in the present day needs no ivy-bush to announce it as in days of yore, and the very hotels that formerly bore the sign now retain the *bush* only, and drop the neglected ivy: it “dies, and makes *no sign*.” So that in good sooth ivy must be contented with the fate assigned to it in the old carol cited by Brand, where it is put in contrast with the glorious old English Christmas-inspiring red-berried holly:—

“Holly and hys merry men they dansyn and they sung,
Evy and hur maydenys they wepyn and they wryng.”

But, really, this is becoming a dissertation of so sombre a character, that we almost fancy ourselves giving out that celebrated couplet from Sternhold and Hopkins—

“Like to an owl in *ivy-bush*,
That self same thing am I;”

we must, therefore, look out for a brighter object. It may not, however, be amiss to state, that ivy, if planted in pots, and properly watered, may in any balcony or parlour be taught to trail upon trelliswork in a very elegant and ornamental manner, with little trouble, and thus agreeably diversify a drawing-room with a feature of the picturesque.

Authors state ivy to be considered symbolical of friendship, from the *closeness of its adherence* to the tree on which it has once fixed itself; we, however, rather feel inclined to say to this too fraternal hugger—

“ Paws off ! ” It is said by herbalists that a decoction of the leaves or berries applied to the forehead gives ease in the head-ache, and hence the propriety of the appropriation of ivy to wreath the brows of bacchanals, who are charitably supposed to require such a bandage: but in modern practice the “ *fronde coronat* ” is superseded by a glass of soda-water.

Amid the dearth of other flowers, at a time when in days of yore we were wont to find ourselves

“ In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice,”

the history of a stranger plant now green and conspicuous among the branches of the denuded trees, offers itself to our notice not unappropriately.

At this season of the year perhaps a more interesting or exciting object can scarcely come under the sphere of our observation, than the long familiar *Mistletoe*. It is one of those plants of general interest that are alike noticed by the clown and the philosopher; and attracts the attention of the meditative man of science in the open fields of observation, as well as the unscientific votaries of fun and frolic, that in these bronzen utilitarian days still dot the scene here and there as a counterpoise to their graver and more studious brethren. I shall, therefore, in the brief sketch I am about to give of the plant, admit a sportive vein that few other subjects would allow in philosophical discussion, remembering that mirth and joy have ever nestled among the white berries of our festive plant; for as Walter Scott says—

“ Forth to the woods did merry men go
To gather in the Mistletoe.”

The decorative effect of our domestic hearths garlanded with holly, ivy, and mistletoe, during the festival of Christmas, cannot fail to be exciting, derived as the custom is from time-honoured antiquity, and recalling cherished, though perhaps forgotten, feelings of holidays and happiness. The original idea appears to have been to decorate houses and temples at the winter season with *every kind of evergreen*, and mistletoe among the rest; that the sylvan spirits, supposed to be devoted to the woods, should be tempted to reside for a period in the abodes of men, and so protect them from evil. Why mistletoe became so particularly regarded, appears to have arisen from a superstition extending back as far as druidical times, when the young bride wore a branch of mistletoe suspended from her neck, which was supposed (as it was considered a remedy against barrenness,*) to ensure an offspring numerous as the spotless berries produced by the plant itself. So that formerly it seems to have been the exact converse of the dreaded *willow*; for while those that had *lost* their loves were conducted to that hopeless barren tree, or at least recommended to sojourn beneath its shade, those damsels who were not in such an unfortunate predicament, were either merrily or stratagetically escorted to the mistletoe, whose berries being pure white, of course could not fail to intimate the bridal wreath, and white satin ribband. Archdeacon Nares, who has written very learnedly on this subject, and seems to be a great friend to the mystic rites of the mistletoe, deprecates any unseasonable resistance on the part of ladies taken

* Matth. Comm. in Dioscorides.

to or caught under the sacred plant ; as he states that a non-performance of the usual ceremonial brings in its train all the evils of old-maidenism. It appears that the *berries* of the plant alone constituted its privilege ; one was to be plucked at every salute, and various authorities insist that when the *last* berry is plucked from the bush, its potential and venerated character ceases.

“ One single berry yet remains
Untouch'd by rude and vulgar swains ;
By all unpluck'd, it seems to say
Whate'er has passed is Christmas play ;
But now, ere comes the vernal breeze,
The *last* chance fortune offers—seize !”

The most remarkable circumstance, however, in the history of the mistletoe is its growth. It is always found growing upon and imbibing its support from the juices of some tree ; it has never been met with attached to earth, nor can any treatment induce it to grow there. It is, therefore, termed by analogy a parasite ; but a vegetable parasite is somewhat different from a human one. Dr. Johnson defines a parasite to be “ one that frequents rich men's tables, and earns his welcome by flattery ;” and Shakspeare denominates parasites as

“ Most smiling smooth *detested* parasites ;
Courteous destroyers, *affable* wolves, *meek* bears.”

But our vegetable parasites, when they have once taken up their post, have no need to be “ *affable* wolves,” as they cannot be got rid of by any process ; but rather tyrants than parasites, prey upon the tree they have taken possession of, and retain their hold

till death. *Epiphytes* are very common among vegetables, the greater number of the *Lichen* tribe being so, as well as many of the *fungi*; but it is rather uncommon to find a true parasite, the epiphytes only living upon other plants as a nidus, and not deriving subsistence from them as is the case with the mistletoe.

Some have considered the ivy to be a parasite, tho' in reality it takes a tree as a fulcrum or prop only, and merely exemplifies the conduct of those good-natured friends who will kill you with their officiousness sooner than deprive themselves of the pleasure of your company. The *Orobanchæ*, the *Lathræa squamaria*, and the *Listera Nidus-avis*, have all been considered parasites, but in fact they only seem to shelter themselves among the roots of trees as a secure asylum, their very nature demanding shade and obscurity. But the nodular masses of matter replete with juices at the base of *Orobanche major*, the succulent scales from which the *Lathræa* springs, and the nidiform bulbs of the *Listera*, all denote that these plants, however suspicious their nature, require no foreign provision for their sustentation. It is very different with the mistletoe, and apparently also with a little local phenogamous plant, called Dodder (*Cuscuta*), which are, perhaps, the only true parasites among flowering plants known in Britain. The *Boleti*, *Polypori*, and various other *fungi*, are doubtless really parasitical, not only living upon, but often destroying the miserable victims exposed to their invasion.

The mistletoe (*viscum album*, Linn.) is a diæcious plant, of which the females seem to be by far the most numerous, producing from their tetrandrous corolla

and inferior ovary, a white globular viscid berry of one cell, containing one seed. The embryo is dicotyledonous, but the coriaceous leaves with parallel veins, have certainly a very peculiar aspect, and both sides have the same uniform yellowish green colour, which distinguishes the smooth, jointed, round stem. When the embryo germinates, it generally produces two or more radicles, whose shape has been compared to that of a French horn, which curiously enough do not progress downwards, as is common to the generality of plants, but contrary to the law of gravitation often push directly upwards, as is the case when one of the glutinous seeds is deposited on the under side of a branch; and in other cases the direction of the radicle is always perpendicular to the axis of the branch. The provision of nature for the increase and continuation of her offspring, is shown as much in the mistletoe as in any other plant. Although its nature is diœcious, and consequently a plant standing alone might not produce any fruit, it is found that a single seed often nourishes two embryoes, a brother and sister; and the gluten which envelopes the seed furnishes nutriment to the young plants till they have penetrated with their sucker-like radicles, which are devoid of fibrills, into the sap-wood of the tree. As the mistletoe derives no nutriment from the earth, and has therefore no necessity to fall to the ground, its dissemination is wisely entrusted to birds, who are tempted to feed on its white berries when other supplies fail, and in cleansing their bills upon the rind of various trees frequented by them, are sure to leave behind a few of the clammy seeds to perpetuate the

continuance of the parasite. It is not improbable also, that the seeds pass through the bodies of birds uninjured, as stated by old writers, and even benefitted by the forward tendency thus given them to earlier germination.

Birds of the thrush family chiefly delight in the mistletoe berries, especially the *fieldfares* and *redwings*; and as these generally fly in flocks, keeping in one line of direction, it is not unusual to see a corresponding line of mistletoe bushes ranging across the country for a long distance. I have followed such a line till its continuity was broken by a river, when I have almost invariably found that its course was again continued from the nearest tree that presented itself on the opposite side of the water. I remember once observing a long line of hedge overtopped by straggling hawthorns and scrubby maples, every one of both of which were hung with mistletoe; but curiously enough an *oak* in the centre of the hedge was passed over, though the parasite was luxuriant on a hawthorn close *under* the umbrage of the oak.* The large rotund bushy mass that the mistletoe forms, is often very striking, especially if it be pendent; and it is remarkable that there is no disposition in the plant to destroy the tree where it grows, as except at the point from which it develops itself, the radicles penetrate no farther than the sap-wood. The mistletoe, therefore, seems only to act the part of a pseudo-bud upon

* Perhaps where the mistletoe is scarce, or not at all met with in apple orchards, as stated, by Dr. Davies of Presteign, of those of Radnorsbire, the localities may not be frequented by the winter migratory birds belonging to the thrush family. See *Analyst*, vol. 2, where there are remarks on the mistletoe, by Drs. Davies and Streeten.

the tree, no doubt extracting from it nourishment that would have developed a large branch, but not doing material mischief, unless existing in *excess*, or so far surrounding any branch as to cut off the supplies of nutriment from proceeding farther, except into its own reservoirs. It seems always full of moisture, and being therefore extremely brittle, it is corded tightly together by lateral ligatures, that, extending along each dichotomization beneath the epidermis, preserve it from the effects of common accidents; while the base of each branch is firmly socketed into a swelling knob that surmounts the inferior one—thus a regular dichotomous series of branches is formed, all firmly articulated in an ossiform manner into each other, and yet each branch may be considered an independent plant, with leaves, flowers, and fruit.

It seems curious, that though the mistletoe flowers earlier in the year than the apple trees on which it flourishes, yet it does not ripen its small white berries till December, long after most others, and thus is called by Virgil "*frigore viscum*,"*—the *wintry* mistletoe. This may not improbably arise from its being unable to steal sufficient nutriment from its nurse till the latter has got rid of her own legitimate offspring, and lost her foliage too. But at any rate this fact is opposed to the commonly received notion of the descent of the sap in trees before winter, and its dormant state in that season; for if it were so, how could the parasitical mistletoe, which derives its subsistence entirely from the imbibition of the juices of the tree on which it is found, flourish as it does in winter, if

* Virg. *Æn.*, lib. vi., 205.

in reality there were no supplies of sap for it to have access to ; for it very soon dies when separated from the foster-parent on which it feeds. It certainly contrives to establish a fund of its own in the hard yet juicy tubercles at its exsertion in the stem ; but still its root, which is analagous to a sucker, and devoid of obvious radicle fibrils, plunged in the sap-wood of the tree, seems always employed in pumping up a supply of provision for its many-headed branches, equally in winter as in summer.*

It is familiar to almost every educated person that the mistletoe was honoured by the Druids of Gaul and Britain as an heaven-descended plant, which they denominated *pren-awyr*, the celestial, or tree of the firmament ; and also *oll-yach*, *all-heal*,† and distributed at certain times with remarkable solemnities as a precious gift. “When the end of the year approached, the druids marched with great solemnity to gather the mistletoe, in order to present it to God, inviting all the world to assist at the ceremony in these words:—*The new year is at hand, gather the mistletoe!* The sacrifices being ready, the priest ascended the oak, and with a golden hook cut the mistletoe, which was received in a white garment spread for that purpose. Two white bulls that had

* I made the experiment not long since of re-committing to the ground the large arms of an apple-tree on which was a mistletoe-bush, but the plant soon died after the amputation had taken place, quickly withering in its unnatural position, and proving that it depended for support from the circulation of sap from the main bole of the tree from which it was taken.

† Pliny, Lib. xvi. cap. 44., says “*omnia-sanaratem* appellantes suo vocabulo,” &c., and Toland in his “History of the Druids,” says that the identical word “In the Armoricon dialect. is *oll-yach*, in the Welsh *oll-hiach*, and in the Irish *uil-iceach*.”

never been yoked were then brought forth and offered to the deity, with prayers that he would prosper those to whom he had given so precious a boon."*

It was, however, only the mistletoe of the oak that received this idolatrous veneration; and hence, as in the present day, the mistletoe appears most commonly upon the apple-tree, and hardly ever upon the oak, a suspicion has arisen that there must be some mistake in the matter. A gentleman, who has published several ingenious theories, once proposed the hypothesis to me that in the lapse of years a misnomer had arisen, and that in fact *our* apple-tree was the *the oak of the Druids*! I believe he was at last fairly laughed out of the position he had proposed to take up; but if he had not been, the matter is put to rest by Davies, who in the "Celtic Researches," says that the apple-tree was considered by the Druids the *next* sacred tree to the oak, and that orchards of it were planted by them in the vicinity of their groves of oak. This by-the-bye was a sly trick on their parts, as they thus, no doubt, made a nursery for the mistletoes among the apple-trees, and thus offered a very fair chance of getting it easily transplanted to their sacred oaks. Professor Burnet says, that the curious basket of garlands with which "Jack-in-the-Green" is occasionally even now invested on May-Day, is a relic of a similar garb assumed by the druidical assistants, when about to hunt for the mistletoe, which, when they had found, they danced round the oak to the

* Jones's Bardic Relics. The new year of the Druids did not, however, correspond with ours. Toland says, that the druidical new year's day was the 10th of March, "which was the day of seeking, cutting, and consecrating the wonder-working all-heal."—*Toland, Hist. Druids*, 108.

tune of "*Hey derry down, down down derry,*" which literally signified—*In a circle move we round the oak.* Whether the Druids really capered about to the tune of "*Derry down,*" as stated by the learned professor,* I shall leave to Cambro-Britons, and bards interested in the matter to decide at their leisure. There are certainly oak woods in Monmouthshire still called "*the Derry ;*" and Ovid, at any rate, affirms that the Druids used to *sing* to the mistletoe.—

"Ad viscum Druidæ cantare solebant."

Fosbrooke thus details the ceremony, perhaps however amplyfying from Pliny, who merely states that a priest, clothed in a white robe, ascended the tree and cut off the mistletoe with a golden sickle.† "*The bards walked first singing canticles and hymns ; afterwards came a herald, the caduceus in his hand, followed by three Druids, who walked in front, carrying the things necessary for the sacrifice ; afterwards appeared the Prince of the Druids, accompanied by all the people. He mounted upon the oak, and cut the mistletoe with a golden sickle. The other Druids received it with respect, and upon the first day of the year distributed it to the people as a holy thing.*"‡ The Druids, it is affirmed, had an extraordinary veneration for the number three, and as the berries of the mistletoe may be often found clustered in threes, this may probably have enhanced their esteem for the "*celestial plant.*"

* Amænitas Querniæ.

† Sacerdos, canalda veste cultus, arborem scandit : falce aurea demettit.
—PLIN. HIST. NAT. LIB. xvi., cap. 44.

‡ Fosbroke's Ency. of Antiquities, 4to vol. ii., p. 745.

Having been myself a frequent mistletoe hunter, though certainly not robed in the mystic habiliments of "Jack-in-the-Green," or as a white-robed Arch-Druid, I shall now just state the various trees that I have actually seen studded with the hallowed mirth-inspiring mistletoe.

ON THE APPLE—extremely abundant ; and why it is so I think arises from the disposition in that tree to form knots, a disease produced from an excess of sap, or an inertness in it, which the mistletoe offers a relief to, somewhat analagous to cupping—the redundant juices being carried off as nutriment to the parasite,

..... PEAR—rare.

..... LIME—rather common, and often plentiful, investing the trees to the summit.

..... HAWTHORN—frequent, and in extending lines.

..... SYCAMORE, (*Acer Pseudo-platanus*)—scarce. A fine old tree with much mistletoe upon the under sides of the branches, may be seen on Lansdowne, Cheltenham, by the side of the Gloucester Road, pointed out to me by Mr. J. Buckman, a very observant botanist of that place.

..... MAPLE, (*Acer campestre*)—not unfrequent.

..... MOUNTAIN ASH—very uncommon. In the vicinity of Ledbury, and about the Malvern hills.

ON THE WHITE BEAM, (*Pyrus Aria*)—unfrequent; but on the rocks, near the western portal of Chepstow Castle, is a fine tree with much mistletoe upon it. Also on the Cotswolds.

. HAZEL—of very rare occurrence, and esteemed by the Druids next to that on the oak.

. ELM—in one locality only, near Bushley Park Farm, in the vicinity of Tewkesbury.

. ROBINIA-PSEUD-ACACIA—local; though in shrubberies in Worcestershire I have several times seen it there, as at Thorngrove and Stanford.

. WILLOW—occasionally. In a field north of Great Malvern.

. ASH—sometimes very profusely.

. MEDLAR—met with once only, at Forthampton, Gloucestershire.

. ASPEN—very rarely. An instance occurs on the borders of Longdon Marsh, Worcestershire.

. BLACK POPLAR—so excessively abundant in almost all recent plantations in Worcestershire, as literally to bend some of the trees towards the ground; yet on old poplars I have never seen a single plant.

A few other trees have been mentioned on which I have not seen the mistletoe, and I therefore pass on to notice its occurrence on the *oak*, which is now undoubtedly a very great rarity; and I consider this to arise partly from the Romans having destroyed all the druidical mistletoe, for it is most remarkable that though so many old oaks are recorded as existing in

this country, perhaps upwards of one thousand years, old, not one has mistletoe upon them. Even the Rev. W. Davies, in his *Flora of Anglesea*, once the headquarters of druidism, is unable to mention a single locality where the mistletoe now grows there.* A few years ago I had a long ramble in Surrey after the mistletoe of the oak. Being in London, an enthusiastic friend came to me one day and said, exultingly, that he had just heard that the mistletoe had been seen on an oak at Bookham Common, and that in the woods of Surrey it was not uncommon. The next morning off we started over bush, brake, and scaur; and deluged with rain, after many efforts, drew only a blank day: and we learned afterwards to our great mortification, that my friend's informant had *meant* ivy, when he *said* mistletoe! At last, however, on June the 7th, 1837, I was fortunate enough to behold a young oak, about seventy or eighty years old, with four fine bushes of mistletoe growing upon it, in Earl Somers's park, at Eastnor, near Ledbury, on the side of an old British road, at the western base of the Malvern hills, called "the Ridgway;" but on the strictest enquiry and examination, among natural oak woods there of more than three hundred acres in extent, this was the only oak with mistletoe upon it, and is the only one I have ever seen. Mr. J. F. Dovaston has, however, mentioned in Loudon's Magazine of Natural

* The island of Anglesea is taken to be one of their (the Druids) chiefest seats in Britain, because it was a solitary island full of wood, and not inhabited of any but themselves; and then the isle of *Mone*, which is called Anglesea, was called *yr Inys Dwyll*, that is the Dark Island. And after that the *Drudion* were suppressed, the huge groves which they favoured and kept a-foot, were rooted up, and that ground tilled.—TOLAND, HIST. DRUIDS, 222.

History (vol. 5, p. 203), that he once saw the Mistletoe growing well upon the oak, "and what is more singular, hanging almost over a very grand druidical cromlech," in the Marquis of Anglesea's park at Plas Newydd, in the island of Anglesea.

The mistletoe is rather a local plant, though often occurring where it does grow, in immense quantities, as in the orchards of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire. It is rare in Wales, being quite unknown in some districts, becomes still rarer in the north, and is only found in one spot in Scotland. On the continent it is as uncommon upon the oak as with us; and De Candolle, from having never seen it there, was induced to think that the *Loranthus Europæus* was the real druidical plant, which is an untenable opinion—the *Loranthus*, though common on the continent, having never been seen wild in Britain in the present day.

No author that I have met with gives any satisfactory solution as to how the term *mistletoe* has arisen, though German and Danish have been brought forward for the purpose.* But I think I can give the etymology without going so far. Now there is an obsolete old English word called *mistion*, which is employed even in the writings of Boyle; and this is defined in Dr. Johnson's original folio edition of his Dictionary, as "*the state of being mingled.*" Now this is truly the state of our plant, which is *intermingled* with the foliage of various trees, and mixes up their juices with its own; and is now indeed in rural places still simply called *mistle*. If to this we add the old

* See Withering's Bott. Arr. in loc., and Loudon's elaborate *Arboretum Britannicum*.

English *tod* or *toe*, signifying *bush*, we have at once the derivation—meaning the *mingled* or compound bush.

Anciently, as we have seen, the mistletoe was considered a remedy for ALL diseases! The older medical writers, however, regarded it as ministering chiefly to *fertility* and parturition, thus, in fact, continuing in part the old superstition; and it is also said to have been worn as an amulet against poisons. Ray mentions it as a specific in epilepsy,* and as useful in apoplexy and giddiness; and Sir John Colbatch published a “Dissertation concerning the Mistletoe, a most wonderful specifick remedy for the cure of convulsive distempers.” This brochure of Sir John’s seems to have been almost the last serious effort of consequence made in behalf of the medical virtues of our mystic plant, at least in this country; and as it is admitted by all parties that the mistletoe employed *must* be the *viscus quernus*, while it seems reasonable to suppose that if the plant had any powers, the place of its growth would be of little consequence, incredulity has taken possession of the minds of the great majority of physicians on the subject; and Sir James Smith rather sarcastically intimates that “a plant of *viscum* gathered from an oak is preferred by those who rely on virtues, which perhaps never existed in any mistletoe whatever.”† At all events, as stated by Dr. Woodville in the “Medical Botany,” whatever may be yet argued in its favour, “the colleges of London and Edinburgh have, perhaps not without reason,

* Rail Syn. 464.

† English Flora, vol. iv. p. 237.

expunged it from their catalogues of the *materia medica*."

The mistletoe seems still, however, to maintain a precarious place in rustic empirical practice. I asked a farmer, who lives in the neighbourhood of my residence, a short time since, what he knew on the subject; and he said that the mistletoe of the oak, when it could be met with, was a capital thing for a *sick cow*!—but especially after calving.—Shades of the Druids! that "all-heal," once gathered by a white-robed Arch-Druid with a golden hook, and received upon a stainless cloth, as the mystic gift of heaven—shorn of all its glories, and divested of all its sanatory powers as respects the human race, now only figures in the traditions of rural practitioners as an aperient for an ailing cow! It is probable that an elastic gum might be prepared from the mistletoe somewhat similar to Indian rubber, for its sap is viscid as well as the berries, which were formerly used to make bird-lime, whence the latin appellation *viscum*.

I shall now close this account, which I have taken the license of the season to treat in a diversified manner, with the following lines addressed to that identical mistletoe-adorned oak, which I before adverted to as still existing in Eastnor Park, a short distance from Ledbury.

TO AN OAK WITH MISTLETOE GROWING ON IT.*

Hail, King of the Forest ! at last I behold
 The mystical plant on thy branches unroll'd ;
 It mounts to the summit, the leaves flagging down,
 And thou standest a king with thy magical crown.

But tell me what hand, in the silence of night,
 Array'd thy tall stem for the mystical rite ?
 And tell me, how long a meet subject for story,
 King of all thy compeers, thou hast stood in thy glory ?

'Midst the wreck of oblivion, a seer of the past,
 Thou wavest in vain the proud wreath to the blast ;
 Though the hills frown around thee as ever they frown'd,
 No worshipper now for thy plant can be found.

Too late thou uprearest its " all-healing " powers,
 For no Druids now bend o'er the dark vervain flowers ;
 And no white-rob'd priests shall thy honours proclaim—
 No chieftains surround thee with joyous acclaim.

A blaze of proud honour might once have been thine—
 Arch-Druids proclaiming thy nurseling divine,
 Advancing their celts to the God-belov'd tree,
 Proclaiming their lineage, and honouring thee.

And now thou art nothing !—the clouds from the hill
 Roll o'er thee, and leave thee regardlessly still ;
 And the deep mound above thee† no longer displays
 To the blue-painted Briton the beacon's red blaze.

* During the last summer (1840), I had again the felicity of looking up with druidical feelings at this botanical curiosity, in company with a fellow wanderer of " auld lang syne," enthusiastic on such subjects as myself ! A relic must needs be taken by him of the " golden branch ;" but as we were deficient of Virgil's falcion, and the " aureus ramus," flamed far up in the tree, we were compelled, ingloriously, to attain our object with turfy and cloddy missiles, and in the encounter, accident, or the wounded dryad of the tree, *stove in the crown of my friend's hat with a recoiling clod !*

† The fortress on the Herefordshire Beacon, Malvern Hills ; which is supposed by Dr. Card, Vicar of Great Malvern, in a learned treatise on this camp-hill, to have been once occupied by Caractacus.

Remembrance may hallow the thought of thy pride,
And a dream of the past round thy branches may glide ;
As the armour hung up in the dusty old hall,
A thought of the tumults of old may recall.

But a still deeper feeling arises from thee,
As I gaze, forest king, on thy charm-cover'd tree ;
If Caractacus' offspring now linger'd before
Thy trunk, upward gazing, I could not feel more !

His glories are past !—the same fatal decree
Leaves now undistinguish'd thy once divine tree :
A spirit hurries o'er us—and ancestry yields
To the blast that must scatter its crests and its shields !

What boots it the name that our ancestor bore ?
His spirit alone gain'd the wreath that he tore ;
And all bye-gone honours with time cease to be ;—
As futile as Mistletoe on the Oak tree !

WILD FLOWERS OF JANUARY, CONTINUED.

CHAP. II.

TREES UPSET BY THE GALES—LOCALITIES OF REMARK-
ABLE YEW-TREES—YEW-IN-THE-OAK—GROUNDSEL,
DEAD-NETTLE, &C.—STOCKING GORSE—ASPECT OF
NATURE.

“ Oh ! happy they who shun the strife
Of pride and passion's hours ;
And glide along the calms of life,
Like me dispensing flowers ! ”

J. K. HERVEY.

It may, perhaps, be considered somewhat difficult to “ *dispense flowers* ” literally in Britain during the month of January ; but the botanist, who really looks out instead of snoozing half the morning away between snug warm sheets, hugging himself in fancied security as he hears the stormy blast blustering without, and shivering at the frosty finger-marks of Old Winter upon the windows, may always find *some*,—aye, even at this dull period, called in the “ *Calendarium Naturale* ”—NIVALIS or the SNOWING-TIME, when, says Forster, “ the weather is on an average of years *cold*, and the snow often *falling* or *lying upon the ground*.” No doubt about it, and we'll venture to back Forster's assertion to any amount, let Murphy, or any other “ *Weather-prophet* ” guess what they like or *dare* about the matter. Of late years fearful gales have

occurred in January, overturning multitudes of trees, and sadly upsetting the calculations of the farmer as to the drink-offerings he expected from the coming season, by the destruction of sundry apple and pear-trees in his homestead. Almost every orchard shows two or three trees which some former gale has thrown *down upon their knees*, and they invariably point eastward, thus showing that the gale has blown from the opposite quarter. It is remarkable that when a fruit tree has been thus placed apparently *hors de combat*, if it survives the shock, it becomes more luxuriant and flourishing, and is more stable for the future than those of its brethren that have retained their erect position. Apple and pear-trees often revive after being blown down, but not so the rigid church-yard yew, which once fallen, can rise no more. There it is, laid prone in the dust by the midnight hurricane, after a warfare with the tempests of more than a thousand years. Ah! it will be missed by many who have sat within its solemn shadow while the bells have chimed their "church-going" cadence on the sabbath morning, ere the parish priest has presented himself to view; or from a distance been reminded by its solemn plumes, of once-loved friends resting in abandonment within its dark dominion. In a wild state it is generally found growing solitary, although a diæcious tree; and in winter and early spring its funereal boughs appear in moody state very conspicuous amidst its deciduous brethren in the forest. Sometimes the yew is met with in greater quantity than usual, as in the wood on the basaltic hill of Areley, Staffordshire, where its sombre branches over-

shadow a babbling brook in many places with a strangely gloomy effect. I also remember to have seen many old grotesque individuals in the woods that mantle about the base of the Wrekin, under one of which I once spent a sadly meditative day; and yet, in retrospection, that day under the yew, tearful as it then was, now seems full of delicious recollections. Forgetful of the feelings of blighted hope that then enthralled me, I now only seem to see the bright May landscape that gleamed in its loveliness before me, the distant Berwyn mountains, above which many mottled clouds curled in a sky of clearest blue, and the fore-shortened Wrekin, with its rocky crown, seen above its green shoulders, boldly rising before me, while insect murmurs and the sounds of spring wandered with soothing influence about my sylvan cell. Many of the Welsh and Monmouthshire churchyards are black with a multiplicity of yew trees; for instance, that of Mahmilade, between Abergavenny and Pontipool, which has twelve or thirteen, several most luxuriantly cinctured with ivy, and one, whose monstrous bole is thirty feet seven inches in circumference. The Llanfoist yew, in the same county, is a noble tree; and in the churchyard of Mallwyd, near Dinas Mowddy, Merionethshire, are several singular time-honoured individuals with excessively distended branches, spreading forty feet from the bole on every side, in singularly gloomy grandeur. One of the islands in the lake of Loch Lomond is stated to bear a wood of several thousand yews, a circumstance, perhaps, unparalleled in Europe. The yew occasionally presents itself in very curious positions, from its

berries having been carried off and dropt or hidden by birds. I have more than once seen it as an epiphyte upon the willow, and one of considerable bulk is now growing *within* an *oak* near Ribbesford, Worcestershire; and from its size and the wrenching power it has exerted upon the broken trunk of its sustainer, has evidently grown there for a period exceeding a century. The intertwining of the contrasting foliage of the two trees has a most remarkable effect. The ordnance surveyors have even recorded the circumstance, and "the yew-in-the-oak" appears marked in their map.

But we have been blown into a digression by the force of the wind, and must resume the point in hand. *Four* wild flowers at least may always be found in bloom at this season of the year. The first is the Groundsel :

" Though storms may rage and skies may lower,
We are sure to see the groundsel in flower."

The flower of the groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), like all those of the Linnæan class *Syngenesia* to which it belongs, consists in fact of an assemblage of small florets harmoniously enclosed within a common envelope botanically named a *receptacle*. This may be seen very beautifully with a common lens before the blossom is fully developed, for when it is, all that in fact meets the eye is the assemblage of yellow bifid stigmas that are uplifted above the quinquifid florets and their five stamens. At the base of each floret is a germen, which, after the stamens and pistils have faded, becomes a *pericarp* or seed-vessel, surrounded with a

downy fringe or *pappus*, ready to waft the seeds far away on airy wing, which is finally done, and the withered base of the reflex receptacle perforated with the holes which received and held the bases of the pericarp, then puts on an appearance very similar to the top of a pepper-box. The grey aspect of the metamorphosed flowers when arrayed with their down-invested seeds has suggested the name of *Senecio* for the genus of the plant, from the latin *Senex*, an old man, whose "hoary hairs" it may be thought to represent. Though the humble groundsel is now little thought of except by those who keep goldfinches or canaries, yet in the hands of the old "simplers," it held considerable rank as a *herb of power*. Culpepper says it is "a gallant and universal medicine;"—"lay by your learned receipts," he exclaims—"this herb alone, preserved in a syrup, in a distilled water, or in an ointment, shall do the deed for you in all hot diseases; and shall do it—I. Safely. II. Speedily."

The second flower that now meets the eye in sheltered spots about the hedges, is the Red Dead Nettle, (*Lamium purpureum*), which, with its roseate corolla concealing the brilliant scarlet anthers under its protecting hood, well deserves a close examination. Then there is the Daisy, timorously peeping here and there on the grass plot, as if reminding us that bad as things in general look, *hope* is not quite extinct. And last of all, somewhere or other, the Prickly Furze (*Ulex Europæus*), with its bright yellow clusters often glazed with the hoar frost, and daring a touch from any intruding finger, marks with one *remanet* of beauty the else desolate and cheerless waste.

“ It is bristled with thorns, I confess,
But so is the much-flattered *Rose* ;—
Is the sweetbriar lauded the less
Because among prickles it grows ?
'Twere to cut off an epigram's point,
Or dis-furnish a knight of his spurs,
If we foolishly wish'd to disjoint
Its arms from the lance-bearing *Furze*.”

Such is the *dictum* of Horace Smith, and we hope, therefore, that no person will wish the *Furze* or *Gorse* a thorn less, except stern destiny insert one in his fingers or toes. We well remember a rough gymnastic game among boys which used to be called “ *Stocking Gorse*,” and consisted in placing the unfortunate personification of the stocker upon his back, when his legs were twirled over his head and forcibly struck upon the ground, till—“ hold, enough !” was the cry. As in the present day the *Gorse* has suffered considerable diminution from enclosures in all directions, we conclude there is little necessity for the *stocking* process, and it has probably ceased ; but the name of “ *Stockings*” frequently occurs in county maps, and we may therefore here observe that it has nothing to do with a *pair* of those useful articles, as many usually suppose, but refers to the original and actual *stockings of gorse* that took place when the land was first enclosed from the waste. But we have *stocked up* enough for the present month, though we frankly confess that the *stock* of flowers here displayed is not likely to fetch much in the market : all that we can say is, that we must “ *look out*” for brighter days.

Three remarkable aspects of nature may be pre-

sented to the notice of a student of nature in January. Should the weather be settled frost, the crisp fields will tempt his vagrant steps to thread the meanders of the whimpering brook, overhung with grotesque gnarled oaks; its sides glittering with glassy ice, marking the late height of the stream among the bushes, while crackling fragments keep perpetually falling, and, from the unfrozen water, perchance he rouses the sapphire-winged Kingfisher. If the frost retreats, all is calm and brilliant as summer, and the Missel Thrush keeps ceaselessly singing;—or in sterner mood, blasts bellow among the hollows of the mountains, clouds scud before the western gale, vapours majestically stalk like phantoms over the distant hills, and though wandering beams burnish with unwonted brightness many a wood or rocky ridge in the wide landscape, the transient brilliance only augurs the furious rush of the on-coming stormy commotion.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR JANUARY.

THE practical Botanist need not be idle in fine weather, even at this seemingly ungenial season; for Cryptogamic vegetation is now in its highest perfection among several tribes. Rocks, and gloomy pattering spots among trees, should now be examined for the minute but exquisitely beautiful and curious *Jungermannia*, many of whose matured *thecæ* may be perceived in perfection. These, if collected in a semi-expanded state, may, by the application of water, be made to burst under the eye; or, if placed in a damp spot the over night, will be found expanded in the morning like a cruciform flower at the end of a long white transparent petiole, while a heap of brown dust, the reproductive sporules of the plant, lies at its feet. Among this dust the microscope will show a number of *chain-like* processes, the use of which has not been determined. I, however, conceive them to be intended to scatter the sporules from the theca by their violent contraction and dilatation at the time it unfolds, which may be thus exemplified:—The *Jungermannia* is excessively susceptible to moisture, shrivelling up quickly without it, and remaining in a state of abeyance; but some portion of heat is required to expand the theca: the moment this is applied its valves burst open, exposing their delicate contents, and the irritation thus occasioned by the light appears to cause a violent contraction and dilatation of the chains interspersed among the sporules, which continues till the whole of them are violently expelled from their nidus. This is evident by placing an unexpanded theca on the ledge of a pane of glass in the sun, when a lens will exhibit the most singular commotion within the theca as soon as its valves open, as if an immense number of minute serpents were writhing in

the most dreadful agonies, and combating each other with unmitigable fury till not one was left alive upon the field.

The *Lichens* are now in glorious perfection on rock and tree, tempting the foot to the broken rocks of alpine solitudes, or the dark and devious recesses of the grove and forest. It is but lost time attempting to dislodge lichens from the rocks in summer—when *skinning flints* is really hard work; but at this time, expecting no visitants, they are taken by surprise, and easily secured, as the frost either scales off the rock with the lichens upon it, or the moisture swells the lichen above the surface to which it is so closely attached in the burning heats of summer. Thus captured, the vital principle becomes suspended in the crustaceous lichen, to be again renewed, however, at any distance of time, when exposed to the external atmosphere.

WILD FLOWERS OF FEBRUARY.

CHAP. III.

VARIOUS TINTS OF BUDS AND TWIGS IN THE SUN-
BEAMS—BRILLIANT EFFECTS OF A FROZEN SHOWER
—DANDELION, VERONICA, DAISY—MOSSES IN PER-
FECTION OF BEAUTY—HELLEBORE, PERIWINKLE—
SUDDEN SNOWSTORM.

“ And now comes the calm mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the Squirrel and the Bee from out their winter home.”

BRYANT,

“ *Post nubila Phæbus* ”—sunshine after bluster—
is not unfrequently the case in February; it will be
well, however, not to hallo before we are out of the
wood, but yet enjoy a fine bright day when it comes.
The budding of deciduous trees never appears to better
perfection than in this month, and the various divari-
cations their branches present, when in relief against
a clear blue sky, offers a pleasing and interesting
spectacle. The general idea of a leafless tree is that
of a cold denuded surface, on which no tint of beauty
reposes; but how false the supposition. As the sun
in his retreat westward now breaks forth in effulgence
from an amber cloud, and his horizontal beams light

up the groves and trees, what vivid tints rise as by enchantment at the heads and extremities of the branches of a hundred scattered veterans of the forest, whose glazed buds, already preparing for the spring campaign, were not before apparent. The Elm tops display a crowded assemblage of light brown slender twigs; a golden ray now glancing on the Willows shows the vinous hue of their long-extending rods; the Sycamore presents its buds of pale green; the still paler catkins of the Birch are seen amidst its quivering branches and silver stems; in dark array the digitated polished buds of the Witch Hazel appear; while wherever the sun lights up an avenue of Limes, coral and crimson tints beautify in brilliant but evanescent displays its shadowy arcades.

Occasionally a charming spectacle is presented to the admiring eye amidst the recesses of the hills, when a shower of rain has *frozen* as it fell upon the woods and coppices, encasing their buds with an envelop of the most brilliant chrystal. In the vagrant beams of the morning the trees sparkle with their icy load, as if robed by enchantment; and as the breeze plays among their topmost branches, a shower of crackling spiculæ falls about on all sides, scaring the chattering Field-fares and Redwings as they attempt a descent, and swarm about their old accustomed perches; while the frightened Squirrel, leaping madly from bough to bough, increases the noise and the shower in his career; and the blue-winged Jays, ever jealous of an intrusion on their retired haunts, raise their reiterated screams with tenfold pertinacity. Well, we have at last reached a sheltered glade in the wood, a retired

nook where "folly is shut out," and yet where the warm sunbeams penetrate to and cheer us after a long perambulation along the hill-side, over crisp brown brakes and pallid withered moss. All is dark and shadowy out of the direct course of the solar beams, but here and there amidst the wood a ragged lichenized rock juts forth like some hoary bard of ancient days, to diversify the gloom; but overhead the deep blue sky is calm and serene as a May-day, the lark is carolling his matin hymn there, and amidst the alders and holly bushes that girdle round the faintly glimmering pool and swamps below, the sable bird "with orange-tawny bill," is whistling his cadences to hasten on Spring from amongst the yet unexpanded primroses; while slowly journeying high in air, a whole tribe of cawing rooks are hastening to their nest-trees.

How pleasant it is now to come unexpectedly upon some warm sunny bank, that surly Winter seems to have forgotten to have visited in his wrath, and where all is mild, genial, and invigorating. There the Dandelion shows his golden mimic sun, the blue-eyed Veronica (either *Polita* or *Hederifolia*), languidly opens her azure blossom, and a band of laughing Daisies—

"Ever alike, fair and fresh of hewe,
As well in Winter as in Summer newe,"

as Father Chaucer wordeth it, revel in the bright but transient beams of the halcyon noon of February. A favourite with us as with Dryden, and the father of English poetry, we cannot resist a few verses on it as thus displayed the earliest among Flora's primaveral train,

THE DAISY.

"Of all flouris the floure."

CHAUCER.

No sooner does the sun appear
From out the vapours hazy,
Than, first bright offering to the year,
Expands the little Daisy.

While fogs are dense, and winds are bleak,
Safe hous'd and shut up, *stays-he* ;
And will not blanch his crimson cheek ;—
Too tender is the Daisy.

Yet, should the sun but venture out,
In splendour on his *gaze*,—*he*
In smirking silver turns about—
A *courtier* is the Daisy !

The sun withdraws his radiant fires,
To tarry would be crazy ;
So quick the wary flower retires —
A *mimic* is the Daisy !

Up with the sun, his petals spread,
In plenitude of *rays*,—*he*
Gathers them up, and nods to bed,
A *sleepers* is the Daisy !

Thus truly called the "eye of day,"
His course alternate, *stays-he* ;
Sleeps till his curtains catch the ray
Of morn—and opes the Daysie !

Ah ! thus a lesson may be gain'd
Unthought of by the lazy ;
Make speed while light can be obtain'd,
Just like the red-ting'd Daisy !

It is hardly worth while to look at the garden *yet*, though, if snow and frost do not entirely erminize the scene with their pale habiliments, it is evident that *something* is stirring in the ground; and here and there verdant patches are appearing, which we must have patience to wait a week or two ere we behold their results. The *Mosses* are now in their perfection of verdure, beautifying with their soft close robe many a rock, damp wall, thatched roof, or old prostrated trunk. They bear no flowers, but their elevated urns, covered with a warm hairy cap as in the *Polytrichi*, veiled from the rude blast as in many genera, or fringed curiously about their orifices as in the majority of species, all discover the same care for the protection of the sporules from which the young *Mosses* are to spring, as in plants whose more specious aspect, and more highly-developed organs, seem to have stronger claims upon our notice. The *Mosses* are nature's coverlid, which she casts lightly over every deformity. The dank stagnant marsh is hidden and overspread with the pale green, roseate, or silvery *Sphagni*, or Bog-mosses; the underwood assumes a golden hue from the bright piliated caps of the *Polytrichi*; every fallen trunk is quickly covered with the velvet *Hypni*; and wherever trees are burned in the woods, or fires lighted there, the black spots are quickly overgrown with dense masses of the *Funaria hygrometica*. And what roof or old wall is without its colony of green, grey, silvery, or purple-stemmed *Mosses*?

" 'Tis nature's livery round the globe,
Where'er her wonders range :
The fresh embroidery of her robe,
Through every season's change.

Through every clime, on ev'ry shore;
It clings, or creeps, or twines—
Where bleak Norwegian winters roar;
Where tropic summer shines.
With it the Squirrel builds its nest;
In it the Dormouse sleeps;
It warms e'en Philomela's breast;
Through it the Lizard creeps."

In the height of summer to tread or recline upon the soft velvet Moss within the shady shrubbery, or upon the mountain side, as the sounds of evening rise from the vales below, while the sun goes down to his mountain-bed in gorgeous splendour, and the scents of a host of odoriferous plants rise upon the gale and soothe the mind to meditative tranquillity, is one of the luxuries which a true lover of nature treasures up in his thoughts to enjoy over again in an afternoon nap at such a time as this. In Lapland curious portable bedding is made of the Golden-hair Moss, and mattresses and door-mats in the north of England. The Bog Mosses (*Sphagna*) form the best possible packing for young trees, to send abroad. Minute as the vegetation of Mosses may, at first sight, appear, in the northern regions of the earth they now form nearly a fourth-part of the vegetation, and almost a thousand distinct species have been enumerated. They especially adorn and diversify alpine scenery, and variegate the horrid sublimity of cliffs that would otherwise frown only in horror, without a gleam of beauty to charm and interest the wanderer.

"It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green."

SCOTT.

In wild waste spots, or even occasionally in the vicinity of towns, whence it may have escaped from the nursing of cultivation, a flower of rank growth, grave aspect, and dull colouring, sometimes attracts the eye of the botanical observer, flourishing luxuriantly even at this cheerless period of the year, as if it were sensible it would be utterly passed over as unworthy of notice at any other time. This is the Fetid Bearsfoot (*Helleborus fœtidus*), conspicuous where it does grow amidst the rubbish that environs it, by its dark digitated leaves and dirty green involute petals, edged with deep purple. The following characteristic lines well describe the aspect of the plant just referred to:

“ Within the moist and shady glade,
What plant in suit of green array'd,
All heedless of the wintry cold,
Inhabits?—Foremost to unfold,
Tho' half conceal'd, its bloom globose,
Whose petals green, o'erlapp'd and close,
Present each arch'd converging lip
Embroider'd with a purple tip;
And green its floral leaves expand
With fingers like a mermaid's hand.”*

It may be worth while on one of the few sunny afternoons that even February affords, to linger in some little bosky copse open to the west, and rising high above the Severn, whose red brimfull stream proudly breasts the meadows below, till it disappears in a broad crescent, gleaming like a scimitar in the sunbeams. The coppice is abundantly overspread with the evergreen leaves of the lesser Periwinkle

* Mant's British Months.

(*Vinca minor*), entangling itself in every direction, and forming a grateful object for the eye to rest upon at this leafless time, while here and there the genial warmth has tempted a few of its bright blue flowers to expand, above which *Bombylius medius* poises as if fixed in air—again to vanish with the vagrant sunbeam. It is gone!—a cloud involves the setting sun, and in a moment shrouds him from view—blasts sweep pitylessly from the north, and bear along a volleyed cloud of snowflakes through the realms of air—mountain, wood, valley, and river, alike disappear amidst the blinding storm; and in the succeeding stillness of advanced night, the pale moon faintly shining in a circlet of white cloud, exhibits fields, woods, and hills, again invested with the soft, pure, and dazzling ermined robe of winter.

WILD FLOWERS OF FEBRUARY,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. IV.

THE AWAKENING OF SPRING IN THE COUNTRY AND
THE CITY—APPEARANCE OF GELATINOUS FUNGI—
MISERIES OF A THAW—SNOWDROPS.

“Already now the snowdrop dares appear,
The first pale blossom of the unripened year.”

MRS. BARBAULD.

Methinks I hear a rustling among the withered brown leaves that have lain so long matted together in frozen silence within the deep glades of the sombre wood. Is it the hare starting from her form to revel in the mild radiance of a February sun? Is it the speckled snake slowly uncurling from its long repose to glide to the nearest warm slope, couched beneath the shelter of the prickly but golden gorse! No!—Softly!—Spring *herself* is awakening!

Look to the sunny side of that still leafless grove—green oases begin to appear in the withered expanse. The Spurge Laurel (*Daphne Laureola*), with



its shining deep green leaves, is now about to expand its pale green flowers that would be scarcely noticed at any other time, and which Linnæus says are "sad in colour, ungrateful in scent, and blossoming in a gloomy season;" but Linnæus must have been in a melancholy humour when he wrote this, for in my view the shining *dark* green leaves and bright *light* green flowers of the plant, appear in the leafless woods with a pleasing effect.

The leaves *only* of the *Arum* are now pleasingly dotting the banks; and here and there an occasional Primrose, like one or two specks of blue sky in a stormy day, embellishes the present and tells hopefully for the future scene. But we must be patient—Spring is only *awakening*!

In the garden hosts of green leaves are bursting the sombre mould, gladdening the exploring eye; and the Snowdrops, those "fair maids of February," pale and pensive as the demurest nun, and white and spotless as the snowflake itself, are "coming out" for the season. The little sprightly Aconite, too, is now seen flaunting in green and gold beside the border;

———— " Winter Aconite

Its butter-cup-like flowers that shut at night,
With green leaf furling round its cup of gold; "*

rather too gay to be quite in keeping with the aspect of things around; and that beautiful evergreen the Laurustinus (*Viburnum tinus*), is now displaying joyously its profuse clusters of white flowers. Even in the garden—SPRING IS AWAKENING!

* Clare.

In the country the naturalist now hears dulcet sounds mingling with his morning meditations. The blue Nuthatch briskly taps upon the bough, shakes off a load of encrusting lichens, and as he snaps up the insects beneath, loudly chirps his delight. The great Tit, instead of his usual harsh *grate*, now attempts a brisk but imperfect madrigal. The Blackbird commences his musical intonations morning and evening, and the Woodlark sings soft and sweet. This is the prelude to the concert that must soon arise, for—
SPRING IS AWAKENING !

As a gleam of sunshine breaks in upon the dusty room (for the sanctum of a virtuoso is sure to be dusty), out pops a blue-bottle-fly, weakly buzzing as he inspects the state of affairs; retiring again with the vagrant ray of light back to his dark snuggerly behind unopened books; while a stern *Sir Forceps*, who has marked him from a sly corner, tightens his strings, mends his nets, and begins to prepare for the active hostilities of a new campaign. The student, with some surprize, now begins to *see* how the dust has gathered about him—for *Spring is awakening* even here !

In the boudoir fair ladies now smile to see that their Hyacinths (all varieties of the oriental Hyacinth, *H. orientalis*), are giving evident signs of speedily, or even now, exhibiting a show of rich fragrant flowers in their white, or green, or purple glasses; and “Ma” is surprised to see the sun, and “Pa” throws up the window for a moment, and young heads and hearts begin to fidget, and flutter, and beat! In short all the “gloomy weather” of almanack makers

is at once forgotten, and while the sun shines, nothing but walks and rides, and visits, and balls, and last "not least," new dresses to replace the dowdy ones of winter, can be talked or thought of; and thus it must and ever will be so when spring gives signs of its *awakening*.—Another short slumber, and the winds of March will shake it wide awake!

It frequently happens at this season of the year, if wet weather prevail, (for on the average of years the month will not bely its name of "February fill-dyke,") that various coloured gelatinous substances present themselves on sticks, posts, rotten branches of trees, &c., as if jellies had been sportively thrown about, or had dropt from the sky. Various opinions formerly prevailed as to their origin; and it was vulgarly supposed they were relics of fallen stars! It is now well understood that these curious substances belong to that division of the vegetable kingdom denominated *fungi*, and have sporidia immersed in their mass, from whence fresh plants are produced, although unable to luxuriate except in an atmosphere saturated with moisture. Hence, under the influence of the sun they dry up and entirely disappear. Some of these vegetable jellies have very rich colours, and trembling as they lie swelled out with moisture, have taken the name of *tremellini*. The *tremella deliquescent*, frequently seen on old posts and decayed stems of annual plants, has been called St. Gudula's lamp, from its brilliant yellow colour, apparent and sparkling at a considerable distance. Others are white like paste, and some are bespattered about similar

to the brains of animals. All present singular aspects, and probably nourish peculiar minute animalculæ.

In reference to the wet weather that often occurs at this season, Forster quaintly observes—that it is “frequently showery, and *then* the ditches are full and streaming.”* Such a state of things Howitt depicts in the following language, which it must be confessed is a miserable “*look out*” indeed:—It will be, therefore, perhaps better to keep within doors at present, unless the doctor be wanted. “All things are dripping with wet: it hangs upon the walls like a heavy dew: it penetrates into the drawers and wardrobes of your warmest chambers: and you are surprised at the unusual dampness of your clothes, linen, books, and papers; and in short almost every thing you have occasion to examine. Brick and stone floors are now dangerous things for delicate and thinly-shod people to stand upon. To this source, and in fact to the damps of this month operating in various ways, may be attributed not a few of the colds, coughs, and consumptions, so prevalent in England. Pavements are now frequently so much elevated by the expansion of the moisture beneath, as to obstruct the opening and shutting of doors and gates; and your gravel walks resemble saturated sponges. Abroad the streets are flooded with muddy water, and slippery with patches of half-thawed ice and snow, which strike through your shoes in a moment. The houses and all objects have a dirty and disconsolate aspect. In the country the roads are full of mire, and you have naked hedges,

* Perennial Calendar,

pastures half submersed in water, with dirty patches and loosened stones.”*

It must, indeed, be admitted, that about the close of February, a continued thaw brings about all the unpleasantnesses just depicted, the mountains are wreathed with mist, clouds involve the sky, obscure the woods and meads, and every brook is

“Foaming brown with double speed,”†

while the garden or grove dripping with the falling torrents, presents only mournful objects for the eye to repose upon. But this humidity is the process that nature requires, by which sufficient moisture may be stored up in her secret repositories to form a fund to nourish the numerous flowers that she even now contemplates in embryo, and which she will in due time awaken and produce. Therefore, at present, we will not proceed beyond our tether, but take the *seasonable* weather that the season itself demands—for

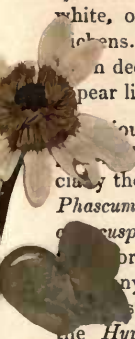
“Now old Aquarius from his rainie urne,
Pours out the streams, and fills both loch and burne;
While *Februa*, with waterie load opprest,
Cracks the crimp ice on Winter’s frozen breast;
Then seated on some sunnie brae, she strowes
About her feet the Snowdrop and Primrose.”

And so have we seen them adorning many a “sunny brae” about this time; nor is it easy to depict the beautiful aspect of the Snowdrop, when in a truly wild state, as in some glens of the Malvern hills, where hundreds of its stainless bells droop to earth as if dashed at random by the hand of Flora wide over mead, and bank, and wood.

* Howitt’s “Book of the Seasons.”

† W. Scott.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR FEBRUARY.



The *Jungermannia* should still be attended to on the hills and among the woods, and *lichenizing* will also employ the cryptogamic botanist advantageously. The Crab's-eye and Tartareous Lichens appear in full fructification on rocks and precipices; and sometimes a wall of sand-stone will exhibit a wide and beautiful array of the singular *Beomyces rufus*; while the trunks of trees inhabited by the *Spiloma gregarium* are splendidly decorated with patches of crimson sporules. Many an old barn door too is painted with green, white, or golden yellow, by the *Lepraria flava* and other lichens. On old oaks, rugged with furrowed bark, as well as on decayed paling, crops of several species of *Calicium* appear like crowded black sprigs stuck into the wood.

Various genera of Mosses now decorate "the solitary rocks" so lovely in their urn or cup-like fructification, especially the *Grimmia* and *Gymnostomi*, while the very minute *Phascum* almost eludes the eye to find it. Yet the *Phascum cuspidatum*, with its brown polished theca, without opening, may be now perceived, if sought for, in almost any shrubbery. In similar spots the *Dicranum taxifolium* is distinguishable by its broad sharp-cut leaves, and the *Hypni* and *Tortula*, the latter with their singular twisted peristomes, are abundant every where.

At this damp time the *Fungi* offer an abundant source for examination and research, especially the smaller kinds of *Trichia*, *Peziza*, &c., and the curious *Tremellini*. It may be easily noticed how the flabelliform masses of the latter, all arise from simple spheroids, the primordial form of this fungus, pressed and crowded by amalgamating together in their rapid growth; as on damp old pales, hundreds of the common yellow *Tremella* may be often

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seen scattered about, and almost all perfectly globular. The bright blue *Auricularia* (*A. phosphorea*), and others of the same family, are now in full perfection, and on old decaying stumps the purple *Phlebia mesenterica* often appears very conspicuous, as well as the intricately lobed varieties of *Thelephoræ*, and the hairy fingers of *Clavariæ*. In woods the labyrinthal *Dædalea Quercina* has a curious aspect at the roots of trees.

WILD FLOWERS OF MARCH.

CHAP. V.

A MARCH MORNING ON MALVERN HILLS—CROCUSES, MEZEREON, APRICOT, PYRUS JAPONICA, ETC.—FLOWERS OF THE WOODS AND FIELDS—FLOWERING OF THE HAZLE, YEW, AND ELM.

“ Mild-breathing Zephyr, father of the Spring,
Who in the verdant meads doth reign sole king,
Who, shelter'd here, shrunk from the wintry day,
And careless slept the stormy hours away,
Hath rous'd himself, and shook his feathers wet
With purple-swelling odours, and hath let
The sweet and fruitful dew fall on this ground,
To force out all the flowers that might be found.”

BEN JONSON.

WE are all familiar with March winds, and nobody doubts but that they will blow; but the particular days on which such *blustrations* are to take effect, this deponent saith not. Let any one, however, who is unfamiliar with these “ blustering railers,” only pay a visit to the iced mountain-top, or even to such hills as Malvern or the Cotswolds, and he will be fully awakened to the excitations of the freshening gale. Once, in the early part of this very month, we remember scaling the ridge of Malvern with a companion in adventure, many years ago; and the scene was strongly impressed upon our memory. So furious was the

rush of the wind over the summit, that we were unable to stand against it, and clung prostrate to the rock for security; while its vehement thunder rendered it impossible for us to hear each other speak. But the scene to the eye, looking towards the Cambrian mountains, was peculiarly impressive; for covered with snow, their indented chains belted the wide horizon in bold relief against a cloudless azure sky, ridge beyond ridge, to the extremest bound of vision, in majestic perspective, effacing for the moment the keen perception of the bitter cold of the blast, and its tremendous power.

With regard to plants and flowers, our more legitimate province, we only undertake to strike the averages of the seasons, premising that any flowers we mention may be met with in bloom, in England or Wales, in some portion of the month under which our observations appear. The garden now begins to "look up," and rows of glowing yellow Crocuses give an evanescent splendour to its borders, especially if the sun shines; for otherwise, though unable to "droop the languid lid," they sulkily refuse to open their coloured petals at all. The *vernal Crocus* might, indeed, have been mentioned in February, but it is *now*, when the different species or varieties are seen in unison—the yellow—the cloth of gold—the pale lilac—the striped—and the blue—that the most beautiful picture is brought before the eye. All the Crocuses continue blowing throughout March, and more than thirty varieties are cultivated in the Horticultural Society's Garden at Chiswick. "Early in Lent," says Mr. Forster, "we frequently see Crocuses flowering

in abundance in pots in windows in London; and for these situations sand alone, or sand mixed with a little dirt, is the best soil." It is a pity, so beautiful as the Crocus is,—

——— "the flower of Hope, whose hue
Is bright with coming joy:"———

that its duration, like most joys of earth, should be so short as scarcely to repay the trouble of planting it in pots or boxes for the drawing-room windows. If, however, about two dozen sets of boxes were kept, to appear in succession as the season advanced, a very pleasing effect might be produced, far preferable to keeping merely one dingy long box, which, though sometimes fragrant with a patch of Mignonette, too often scarcely seems to contain vegetable life within its creaky boundaries.

Just now the Mezereon (*Daphne Mezereon*), makes a beautiful appearance—all flowers—let the weather be ever so severe, and its empurpled dyes and perfumed fragrance render it an universal favourite at a period like this, when floral joys are scanty. Its transient purpose answered, it meets with the "common lot," and, as Summer comes brightly on, the Mezereon is entirely forgotten, till, amidst denuded foliage and dearth of sweets, its humble aspect, "thick beset with blushing wreaths," forces itself upon the admiring observation. Not meaning often to moralize, the Mezereon tempts one to observe briefly at this moment, that it offers an illustration of the homely proverb—"Begin as you can hold out." The Mezereon flashes for a brief day all splendour, and no compeer can rival it; but in a month it is sought for in vain—

stunted in its growth, and no fruit following its bright flowers deserving of any attention, it is absolutely lost and confounded amidst the loftier and more enduring shrubs that environ it, and no one unacquainted with its history would suppose that, insignificant as it then appears, it ever made any pretensions to be considered the gem of the garden. A darker analogy might in fact be drawn, for the small red berries that finally appear on the Mezereon, are a powerful poison.

If the Apricot (*Prunus Armeniaca*), now exhibits a few flowers against the sunny wall as it ought to do, it is a sign that Spring is progressing well, for in a very severe season it will be a month later before the flowers appear; this, therefore, is a harbinger that may be depended on.

The sunny wall is now, also, brilliant with the rich scarlet flowers of the *Pyrus Japonica*, which make a fine show; and the *Corchorius* begins to shew its yellow roses, though at first rather sparingly. The odorous Jonquil, too, (*Narcissus odoratus*), pleasingly spangles the flower-border.

But now for an examination of the woods and fields. The brisk air and enlivening gleams of March are a capital antidote to melancholy—hence a walk out at this time is sure to prove invigorating, for every thing now seems alive. The sun now rises earlier, and gives light as soon as he is up, an intimation which Dr. Franklin was of opinion should be communicated to the world by morning discharges of artillery. True, it is a difficult thing “to turn out,” but once up, how delightful and animating; birds singing, insects humming, trees and shrubs waving in the sweet balmy air,

and plants opening their flowers, and diffusing fragrant scents around; the very smell of fresh turned-up earth, how refreshing; the sound of water how soothing *now* to the ear, because it is not rattling down upon our heads as in February, but is diffusing in rills and brooks nourishment and verdure, while the ground itself is becoming dry. Flora now prepares for the delightful work before her, and lays on her ground tints. The young Wheat and the orchard pastures are assuming a green of the brightest and most charming aspect. Here and there on dry limestone banks, or even on the brown ploughed land, the golden stars of the Coltsfoot (*Tussilago Farfara*), surprise the eye without the contrast of a single green leaf—they come afterwards. On rocks and walls, like silver scattered amidst the moss, the small white cruciferous flowers of the Witlow Grass (*Draba verna*), present themselves in countless numbers; and here and there beneath the hedges, or on the warm banks, several species of blue-eyed Speedwells (*Veronica*), emulate in their tiny blossoms the azure of the cloudless sky above them. A gleam of gold varies the moister hollows where the Pilewort (*Ficaria verna*), has located itself, and spreads out its golden star above its shining heart-shaped leaves, on which the verdigris Oil-beetle may be sometimes seen feeding. The Chickweed, and hairy Cuckoo-flower (*Cardamine hirsuta*), now shew their argent petals, and the barren Strawberry is sure to gladden the eye of the wanderer in the woods; while every vagrant boy displays those soft downy “Pussy-cats” which the Willows evolve as precursors of their unprotected golden stamens. The Hazle also profusely

hangs its long catkins containing that fertilizing dust, which now blown about and falling upon the bright ruby pistils situated beneath them in a separate position, offers a familiar illustration of that curious structure in the fructifying organs of plants on which Linnæus founded his "Sexual System." The sombre Yew now also flowers, and the female Aspen (*Populus tremula*), presents a curious appearance. The Yew, being a dioecious species of tree, evidently flowers at this season that the farina of the male blossoms may be dispersed far and wide by the winds, and thus more surely conveyed to the females, which are on separate trees often long distances apart. If a very small sprig of male unexpanded flowers be gathered they will soon burst open, and if ever so slightly touched, a cloud of dust fills the room where they may be placed, ready to escape into the open air—so admirably are the mechanisms of all nature's structures adapted to fulfil the purposes assigned them!—"Flowers of all hues" will now very soon appear.

About the middle of the month, the Elm (*Ulmus campestris*), displays its sessile tufts of purplish flowers, which, though making no pretensions to beauty in themselves, yet crowded together on the upper branches of the tree, present a rich vinous tint pleasing to the eye, when the sun darts his rays bright upon them. But amidst storms and blasts, too often the concomitants of the season, they may be altogether unnoticed. The common Elm, though most probably introduced into Britain by the Romans, for it nowhere grows wild in our woods, has so multiplied itself in this country from its numerous offsets and

the tenacity of their endurance in the hedgerow, that more than any other tree it now forms a characteristic feature in the scenery of an English landscape. Hence the "Elmy Grange," at once recalls to the eye of memory the old English timbered mansion, with its carved gables and tall brick turretted chimneys, with the moat half filled up and half remaining on the garden side, with steps leading down to it from the terrace-walk, and the whole shaded by majestic surrounding elms coeval with the building their foliage envelopes. Indeed many a country residence has some old sylvan guardian of this kind beside its gate, all knotty, and ragged, and hollow, with broken arms, and bleached patches on its huge bole, bare of bark, like an old retainer grown grey in the service, yet resisting age and decay, and retaining his wonted position to the last. Almost every place has its favourite old Elm, of large dimensions, sanctified by some local name, often on a common or beside a rustic inn, the resort of buoyant childhood, left perhaps for ever, and yet a hallowed landmark in the tearful vista of memory. Such road-side Elms are often picturesque objects, and attract the curious eye of the passing traveller—as the *Crawley Elm*, on the road from London to Brighton, which contains an apartment paved with brick; the Rotherwas Elm, near Hereford; and Piff's and Maul's Elms, near Cheltenham. Often, however, this tree puts on a very distorted and wenny appearance, swelling especially about the roots, and when too often pollarded, becomes so black, stumpy, and hollow, as to seem as if the row in which it stands had been subjected to all the horrors of a

cannonade. The "Elmy Grange" has generally a rookery attached to it, where securely located among the topmost forks of the elms, the sable birds add to the rural sounds that rise around them, a hoarse cawing that tells of coming vernal hours, and sounds not ungrateful to the ear of the observant naturalist.

The Wytch-hazle (*Ulmus montana*), whose gnarled twiggy stumps grotesquely impend above many a ravine or ancient holloway, has its spreading branches now amply covered with a conspicuous inflorescence.



MAUL'S ELM.

WILD FLOWERS OF MARCH,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. VI.

VERNAL INDICATIONS—VARIOUS SPECIES OF VIOLETS—
GOLDEN SAXIFRAGE, TUBEROUS MOSCHATEL, WHITE
AND YELLOW AWLWORTS—DAFFODILS AND SALLOWS
—WINDFLOWER.

“ Smell at my *Violets*!—I found them where
The liquid south stole o’er them, on a bank
That lean’d to running water. There’s to me
A daintiness about these early flowers
That touches one like poetry.”

THE practical botanist now begins to have something to do, and unable to restrain himself as the sun beams forth in splendour from an azure sky, is off to the deep recesses of the wood. But even the admirer of nature’s beauties only, who takes a walk at this season, cannot fail to be roused into poetical excitement by the return of those indications which are bound up with the remembrances of former days. Three things at least now in turn speak to the eye, the ear, and the senses. In the balmy freshness of

morning, the hoarse cooing of the Ringdove sounds singularly plaintive upon the ear. Called into life by a steady burning ray of light, upsprings to amuse, allure, and surprise the charmed eye, a carmine-coloured or sulphur-winged butterfly, oscillating about, like a primrose floating before the wind;—and, oh! delicious excitement, the perfume of the *March Violet* becomes sensibly perceptible.

“Smell at my Violets!”—ah, indeed, their smell at once recalls a thousand blissful hours of early life, when the holiday afternoon was devoted to *violeting* in the wild sequestered lane, or solitary woodside, and when thoughts, and hopes, and joys, were beautiful and odorous as the countless white and purple Violets opening in beauty on the sides of the bosky dingle, as yet undimmed and unwithered by the constant action of burning suns. Where are the hopes and joys of early life now?—alas, man has his violet season but once only!

“Smell at my violets!”—yes, but we must first find out where they are, and these “lowliest children of the ground” are often difficult to get at, though the fragrance they diffuse around is so very obvious. Don’t tell me of the garden; I must now have genuine *wild* violets—these were the charmers of my early days, and these alone can recall the past vision now. Ah! there, as in olden days, still they are, on the very same bank as erst I knew them, when stooping, wond’ring, laughing, smelling, my first bouquet was gathered, and the white and purple violets were proudly marshalled in my hand, and blandly to all my young compeers was the cry—“Smell at my violets!”

Short is the reign of the sweet March violets; they are lost like the charm of life's early spring, and are succeeded by other more specious violets *without scent*, —the “Dog-Violet,” that like the hopes of life, present a fair picture, beautiful to the eye, but deceptive in the expected realization. There are, however, other violets that will rouse the botanist to exertion, if they do not tempt the exploration of the moralist or poet. Two are in flower now, *Viola suavis*, a white violet of fainter scent than the true *odorata*, and the hairy violet (*Viola hirta*). Then there is the beautiful little marsh violet, (*V. palustris*), that crouches its fair gem amidst dripping mosses and bogs, and the *Yellow violet*, that confines itself to the bleak mountain side, and must be sought among the heights of Siluria and Dimetia; and there are yet two other familiar violets that flower all the summer in every waste spot—common and valueless as that universal production *advice*—the *V. arvensis* or field Violet, and the *V. tricolor*, Hearts-Ease or three-coloured violet, from the latter of which all the large and showy varieties of the Garden Pansy have originated. But alas! there is no *smell* to these violets. *Form* can be astonishingly varied by horticultural art, and *colour* singularly modified, but it is beyond the power of human skill to give odour to the “Dog-Violet,” or take it away from the *sweet* one.

There are two curious little plants to be met with in flower at this time in secluded spots by rocks and waterfalls, or even by some neglected brookside, known perhaps only to the wild duck or water-hen, who fly splashing away from the intruding foot of the botanist, who stands a fair chance of a fierce dash of

hail upon his hapless head from the capricious hand of surly March—no great respecter of persons when in pettish mood. These plants are the tuberous Moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*), and the alternate-leaved Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysoplenium alternifolium*), the botanical names of both, when written in a tolerable-sized hand, being about as long as the plants are high! The former is very pale, with very pale flowers, agglomerated together in a capitate form; and the meaning of the Latin trivial name is that they possess no glory! This epithet tempted me to perpetrate “an address” to little Miss *Adoxa*, which I here transcribe from an old scrap of paper :

TO THE TUBEROUS MOSCHATEL,

(*ADOXA MOSCHATELLINA*).

AN! little Adoxa, they say
Thy flower possesses no glory;
But I'll at thy habitat stay,
And prove 'tis a palpable story.

For pale as thy leaflets appear,
And pale as appears thy green corol,
Hid snug from the storms of the year,
I see in its petals a moral.

Thou art but a *wee-one*, tis true,
And held as unworthy the seeking;
Hid under the thicket from view,
While the trees of the forest are creaking.

When March stirs the spirits of air,
And clouds o'er each other are driving,
The dingy floods rolling despair—
Hope tracks thy unnotic'd arriving!

As when, o'er the shadows of night
Appears the first semblance of dawning,
How grateful that pledge of the light
To illness, awake 'neath its awning.

So pale though Adoxa presents
Her form, by the fountain scarce showing;
'Tis a signal that winter relents,
And the Celandine soon will be glowing.

A blank is to nature unknown,
There's still an unceasing creation,
And down to the lichenized stone,
All charm in their time and their station!

Who doubts it should open his eyes,
Once purg'd, they'll reveal unknown wonders;—
So the cloudlet that sails on the skies,
Joins the throng that embattles the thunders.

There is another little wild flower, very characteristic of the primaveral Flora, which never fails to delight the eye of the wandering botanist during March's froward reign, studding a thousand walls and rocks, and hills, with its innumerable silver cruciferous flowers. This is the *Draba verna*, which from its former fame of curing "the disease of the nailes called a whitlow," still bears the common appellation of whitlow-grass. Old Gerarde, "Master in Chirurgerie," whom we have just quoted as to this, in his quaint language thus describeth the plant, which, perhaps, will be intelligible enough even now to the non-botanical reader. "It is a very slender plant, having a few small leaves like the least chickweede, growing in little tufts, from the midst whereof rises up a small stalk, nine inches long, on whose top do

growe verie little white flowers ; which being past, there come in place small flat pouches, composed of three filmes ; which being ripe, the two outsides fall away, leaving the middle part standing long time after, which is like white satin." Mossy roofs often present a pretty appearance at this season, when the sun shines out upon the expanding argent petals of this fairy plant.

The yellow *Draba aizoides* is now in flower on its only known habitat in Britain, the deserted walls of the secluded fortalice of Pennard Castle, in the peninsula of Gower, Glamorganshire, and the adjacent limestone rocks. Its singular aspect there, will be noticed more in detail under the month of September, at which time, in 1839, I visited the spot.

The garden is now gaudy with the yellow glories of the well-known daffodil, which, showy as it is, and therefore gladdening the exploring eye, has in such a position only the redeeming feature of its mention by Shakspeare, as coming

" Before the swallow dares,"

and thus appearing in the advance of more permanent delights—like a portrait that can only give satisfaction in the absence of the original it represents. We can, therefore, only tolerate the daffodil in the garden as Envoy Extraordinary of the floral queen, who takes a temporary position which more valued but tenderer plants would be unable at present to maintain. In the woods and on the hills, however, where this " Pseudo-Narcissus" of the botanist, and " Daffy-downdilly" of the rustic, spreads its roots by

thousands, and now droops in glorious array an innumerable host of lemon-tinted bells, in contrast with the dark boundary of branches that lift their labyrinthal tracery against the deep blue sky, as we have seen with rapt pleasure, about the Malvern Hills, and in the undulations of the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, it is in its proper locality. There alone, when after a long ramble through deep lanes and brambly woods, with scarcely an object to diversify the gloomy sameness, when at last emerging from the dark thicket—a broad line of golden light bursts to the astonished gaze upon the virgin turf of the hill-side, and a nearer view exhibits rank beyond rank, the bright pendent pennons of a countless host of daffodils, the charmed wanderer, as he gazes on the scene, fully recognizes the “beauty” thus combined with the rough winds of March, and long treasures in his memory the remembrance of the scene. Wordsworth has well described such a sight among the romantic scenery of the lakes:

“ I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high, o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company."

Such a prospect can, however, only reward the untiring botanist, who is not afraid to bivouac upon the green though chill turf, and wash down his sandwich with a draught from the pattering rill that splashes down the mossy rock. But whoever dares "look out" at all now without the precinct of the suburban garden, is sure to be gladdened with one bright gleam of vegetable beauty, upon the margin of any pool, or even by the way-side. This is presented in the golden catkins of the Sallow (*Salix caprea*), now in full glory; and, if the morning be bright, recalling the acquaintance of many a buzzing and murmuring bee: yet it may probably have escaped attention, that no fruit ever arises from these specious catkins. It is so—but see, farther within the coppice there are other catkins without the alluring hue of gold. These, on close examination, are seen to be assemblages of pale green clammy ovaries, surmounted by spreading stigmas, intended to receive that splendid hued dust or farina which the golden male catkins before-mentioned give out, and which is conveyed to the female plant either by the agency of the bees or the rough blast. The winds of spring and autumn then, annoying though they often are, have their legitimate agencies to perform in nature's laboratory. In the one case they scatter about profusely the matured seeds that are waiting a favourable wind for their voyage; in the other, as in the yew, the hazle, and

the willow, they waft about that fertilizing powder from plant to plant, without which process, in numerous instances, no fecundation could take place, and of course no seeds be produced by the plants thus curiously circumstanced.

Where the Alder (*Alnus glutinosus*) covers, as it often does, marshy spots and the banks of brooks, its catkins are very conspicuous among the dark branches; the different species of Poplar also make a pleasing show with their pendant catkins.

In the garden the Red Star Windflower (*Anemone portensis*), has a very ornamental effect, producing a succession of flowers throughout this month, at a time when the parterre is but scantily furnished with red or purple flowers. Thus we have now

——— “ A garland for you, intertwin'd
With Violets, Hepaticas, Primroses,
And coy Anemone, that ne'er uncloses
Her lips, until they're blown on by the wind.”*

* Smith's *Amarynthus*.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR MARCH.

IN this month the underwood of forests and coppices is generally felled to a great extent, so that the opportunity should be taken of penetrating woods not before easily accessible even by the botanical foot. Additional habitats will thus be obtained for many rare plants ; for when a grove has extended its sombre dominion over the ground for a number of years, the constant gloom and exclusion of light renders the soil incapable of producing those plants formerly abounding there. Seeds of them, it is true, remain in the deep dungeon of the earth, but each successive year only increases the profundity of their incarceration, by adding a thick damp layer of fallen leaves to the surface of the soil where they lie concealed. At length, the sound of the woodman's axe resounds in the woody glen, the crash of falling branches is heard on all sides, and the beetle and wedges commence their dinning labours.—

“The woodman is loudly calling,
The beetle and wedges he brings ;
For the oak is mark'd for falling
That has stood five-hundred springs !
Hark ! a blow, and a dull sound follows ;
A second—he bows his head ;
A third—and the wood's dark hollows
Proclaim that their king is dead !”

Then it is that the cleared ground, once more exposed to the influences of light and air, reproduces those plants that had seemingly become extinct for many years, and the botanist, therefore, should carefully explore those woods as the season advances, where these falls of underwood have taken place. It sometimes happens, too, that rare or

peculiarly fine specimens of *lichens* may be met with on the trunks or upper branches of felled trees, which of course were not attainable while, in their plenitude of strength, they lifted up their heads to heaven, and spread their branches high in air to a wide extent around. Cryptogamic botany still claims much attention, while the flowering tribes are as yet far from numerous.

WILD FLOWERS OF APRIL.

CHAP. VII.

AN APRIL MORNING—PRIMROSES—DOG-VIOLETS, ANEMONES, ETC.—BUTTERBUR AND TOOTHWORT—CELANDINES, ORCHIS, CUCKOO-FLOWERS—MIGRATORY BIRDS OF SPRING—FLOWERS OF THE WOOD—ADORNMENTS OF THE GARDEN—DENIZENS OF A RUSTIC ONE.

——— “ April comes,
And lightly o’er the living scene,
Scatters her freshest, tenderest green.”

GRAY.

APRIL is a tearful month, full of gleams and showers—like hope struggling with adversity, but with victory in view. It is not redundant in flowers, but scatters with a lavish hand those that shelter under its verdant wing. Tired with the dreary monotonies of winter, who like some scolding tyrant, still turns round again to repeat his threats when we are chuckling at the turn of his back—so even in April, hailing as we do the bright green she daily spreads upon the meadows and within the woods, in the midst of our pleasures a storm of hail or rain o’erwhelms us in its dripping embraces again—and compels us to look out for shelter, in common with the bee and the too venturesome butterfly.

But suppose a morning of unclouded brightness,

the woods vocal with the thrush and the blackbird, and all nature rejoicing in the genial rays of the sun. With such a "bespeak" from the weather-office, we can "look-out" with some pleasure and alacrity, and gaining a beautiful and secluded locality, notice leisurely the gems of creation before us. We have reached a little valley among the hills, where emerging from rocky woods a brawling streamlet urges its froward course, splashing and murmuring over the round stones in its bed, and then quietly stealing into green meadows beneath a rough veteran of the forest overturned by the winter's storm, that now serves a temporary purpose as a rustic foot-bridge. Looking up into a vista of the wood, the *Primroses* now appear in their greatest abundance and perfection. What picture can be more pleasing at this season than to behold a tribe of little ones all busied in the wood, each with their hands buried in primroses. On a close inspection curious varieties are often found, as the umbelled and liver-coloured Primroses, and occasionally the Oxlip (*P. elatior*), occurs. From the latter the rich deep-coloured *Polyanthuses* of the garden are derived, and the curious florist would, therefore, do well to collect any singular varieties of Primrose or Oxlip met with in the woods. In a similar way the singularly-varied blossoms of the favourite tribe of Auriculas have all been derived from a small pale-coloured plant of little beauty found on the Alps. Raw meat applied to the roots of Auriculas is accounted very beneficial to them, and Withering suggests that a similar application would increase the size and beauty of *Polyanthuses*. This is, indeed, only

an extension of the principle of manuring, which affects even wild flowers very remarkably.

Wherever we now look around, the border of the wood is empurpled with violets. But we had better rest contented with the mere *sight* of them, they are "dog-violets"—odourless. Strange that amidst the storms of March the *sweet* violet should present itself; and as bright days arise when we might expect additional odours from the same tribe, a race suddenly appear simulating the beauty of their precursors, but entirely scentless—so that we contemptuously turn away from what without such a prepossession we might have regarded with pleasure and satisfaction. No one likes deception. To make a promise to the eye or ear and break it to the hope, is no uncommon thing in life, but it is not the less disagreeable for that. The delicate *Anemone* (*A. nemorosa*), bending before the wind, inspires far different emotions—it now whitens o'er the damp copse, closing its petals at sunset, or before rain, and expanding them in the fervid rays of noon. As it is a social plant, the numbers that often decorate the mossy carpet of the woods, present the most pleasing spectacle to the eye of the April wanderer, giving a peculiar feature to the spots where they abound, long before the Cuckoo-flower forms those silver islets that sparkle brightly from afar in the damper meadows.

"Anemone's weeping flowers,
Dyed in winter's snow and rime,
Constant to their early time,
White the leaf-strewn ground again,
And make each wood a garden glen."*

* Clare.

A plant with remarkable thyrsus-like purple agglomerated flowers now presents itself often in great abundance (for its habits are social) on the stony barren banks of brooks and rivers. Though well known in summer by its enormous leaves, which are larger than those of any other British plant, it flowers so early and in such low places as to be seldom noticed, though when found by no means inconspicuous, and offering an agreeable aliment to the bees. This is the Butterbur (*Tussilago petasites*), whose leaves not appearing till after the flowers have faded, have several times been used by us as parasols in summer botanical excursions, which their size and the length as well as thickness of their petioles well fit them for. The flowers of the *Hybrid Butterbur*, which is rarer than the common kind, have a peculiarly elegant aspect. Another curious plant, only seen at this season, and that but rarely, is the Toothwort (*Lathræa squamaria*). It is entirely confined to sheltered woody spots, almost always entangled among the roots of trees, from which circumstance many botanists have considered it to be parasitical. Its yellow sickly looking stalk, clothed only with white tooth-like scales, and its very pale purple flowers, impart to it a singular aspect, and it might easily be passed over at a little distance as a dead or dying flower. I once noticed it in rather a curious locality—the lawn in front of Earl Mountnorris's mansion, at Arely, Staffordshire, on the roots of lime-trees. This shows that the plant might easily be introduced into grounds or gardens, where it would flourish beneath the shelter of most deciduous trees.

One of the characteristics of April is its golden

Celandines (*Ranunculus ficaria*). A beam of light flashes from the orb of day as he looks forth from a tempestuous passing cloud, and at once in the moist verdant meadow a thousand golden stars spread out their rays as if at the lifting of an enchanter's wand. Sweetly are they contrasted with the argent stars of the "crimson-tipped Daisy"; and here and there, with maculated leaf, uprises the bright purple spike of the Early Purple Orchis (*O. mascula*). In the marsh the splendid Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), presents her specious glories, and far and wide are scattered the light purple Cuckoo-flowers (*Cardamine pratensis*),—

"Wan-hued Lady-smocks, that love to spring
Near the swamp margin of some plashy pond;—

from whence perhaps as we approach, away springs the quacking Mallard, or the sable Coot ruffles the water as she shuffles off in a long extending line.

In moist rocky woods the Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*), now makes a pleasing appearance, the Hawthorn is evidently becoming leafy, the Wild Cherry beautifully displays its innumerable snowy flowers, and perhaps amidst its branches, the newly-arrived Nightingale charms the ear with her earliest rapturous melody.

"It is the voice of Spring among the trees.*

At this springing season the Botanical Explorer, nervously alive to every enjoyment arising not merely from rural sights, but rural sounds also, is often a recipient of the most exquisite pleasure arising from

* Grahame.

the melody of birds among the budding branches. The feathered tribes now intent upon the interesting process of nidification, seek the most retired and romantic solitudes for their nests. Where the dark frowning rock shadows the still darker stream; where the music of running waters gladdens the mazy labyrinth of the trackless forest; where the still pool, with its flags, bulrushes, and islets of water-lily leaves, is skirted by a thicket of hazels and alders, the ground covered with Blue-bells or white Ramsons;* there the warblers are sure to resort, and there, too, the botanist repairs to seek for his well-remembered favourites; while the Thrush, from amidst a bush of flowering Sallow, below which her blue-spotted eggs repose, or the Black-cap or Willow-Wren, from Aspens or Poplars trembling beside the murmuring rill or old stony mill-weir, pour out their rich tones and varying cadences with a vigour and delight unmarked at a later period. Now, too, it is that in some calm glorious gleam amidst the secluded woods, just as a passing shower has swept away to sprinkle distant groves and orchards, and the pausing wanderer crouched beneath the tortuous trunk of an old pollard Lime, is watching anxiously the rifted clouds, that the joyous note of the *Cuckoo*, confirming the hoped for brilliant vernal noon, is heard once and again, as if from some viewless form in the sky! It sweeps again upon the ear, and with it comes a host of fond cherished remembrances, that for a moment break the film that grief, care, and perhaps estrangement from once loved friends, has caused slowly but con-

* *Allium ursinum*, Linn.

stantly to gather round the heart, as a breeze long blowing in one direction, heaps up on the shore of a lake an accumulated load of fragments, lost to the eye when left to take their own wandering course far over its unruffled surface. And yet, who is there from child to decrepid age, who does not pause to imbibe pleasure or pain at the first sound of the Cuckoo, as it rises on the ear from the deep woods just showing their primary tint of the palest green?

Hark ! I can hear the Cuckoo ! What a show
 The Cherry-trees in wood and orchard make ;
 Here with their clust'ring blossoms row o'er row,
 There drooping lovcly o'er the tangled brake ;
 A shower has fallen, and the branches shake
 Sprinkling the raindrops oa our heads below ;
 The sua breaks forth—Oh ! now's the time to take
 The rural ramble, and behold in blow
 Vetch with its pendants pink, and Stichwort's braids of snow.

Cuckoo ! a thousand exstacies awake,
 A thousand recollections at the cry ;
 April's green woods, the golden gorsy brake,
 Young Speedwell blinking with his azure eye,
 And tipt with orange bands, the butterfly !
 Cuckoo—Cuckoo !—the echoing hill renews
 The swift-returning cadence lost on high :
 Lost, 'midst a labyrinth of bloom and dews—
 Gone like the fleeting joys that perish as we use.

How exciting and animating it is, at this period, on a fine calm and balmy morning, to wander amidst the mossy stones of some sequestered upland wood adorned with Cherry-trees in full blossom, amongst whose branches the Willow-Wren is warbling, or the Titlark circling about and descending with reiterated

song, while a pattering stream is plunging with repeated splashing and gurgling far down within the gloomy ravine, and at profound depth below, shining and sparkling in the sunbeams, a silver river frets and foams amidst rocky fragments, till beyond their barrier it spreads a chrystal line of brilliance amidst the emerald meadows. Or if even only roaming listlessly by the high road, still as the sunbeams blaze upon a length of hedge where the Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), has encamped, and now puts forth its crowded clusters white as a snow-drift along the side of a hill, it is impossible not to pause and admire their lovely aspect; while almost certainly the *Whitethroat* is sure to be seen sporting in and out of the silvery efflorescence, as if anxious to compare its white chin with the sloe-flowers, or feeling that they offered an admirable shelter for its slender and delicate form. As it flits about, exercising the acutest eye with its swift motions, it pours forth a soft, intermitting, shrill, but not unpleasing melody to delight the observer.

The Ground-Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), now flowers plentifully, offering a bright blue devious line to the eye beside many a rustic hedge—hence its vernacular name of “Robin-run-i’-the-hedge.” Some red-cloaked old woman may now be observed in most villages “*carrying off the church*”* in searching for it to make purifying tea.

From our retreat in the wood various plants belonging to the Vernal Flora now arise to view, and claim botanical attention. Among these the Wood Spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*), is very conspicuous

* Of course artistically, as a painter would say.

with its red stem, and the Stichwort (*Stellaria graminea*), with its trailing stems and white flowers, is peculiarly characteristic of this period. Two elegant plants appear also at this time in the sheltered glade, and often in juxta-position, that are very ornamental; and when contrasted with each other, present a feature that would charm even a non-poetical eye. One of these is the White Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*), generally occurring on dry banks, but said to indicate the proximity of water underneath. I remember to have seen a great profusion of this species by the side of the Man of Ross's Walk, at Ross, on a sandstone rock overlooking the beautiful valley of the Wye. The other plant to which I allude, as of frequent occurrence in the central counties of England, is the Wood-Scorpion-Grass (*Myosotis sylvatica*), whose broad hairy leaves are well observable at this time, and whose brilliant azure flowers (curled scorpion-like before expansion), have a most elegant aspect, though not so large as those of the true "Forget-me-Not," which appear at a later period. When seen *together*, as I have frequently seen these plants, and in considerable plenty, in a little bosky meadowy glen close to the thickety side of the Laughern Brook, at Henwick, near Worcester, (a loved haunt of many a blissful day in boyhood), the effect of their azure and white contrasted flowers is exceedingly charming and lovely.

The Wood-Anemone, at its maximum of flowering, now whitens almost every copse or woodland meadow; and scarcely noticeable but by close inspection, the Field Rush (*Luzula campestris*), appears amidst the

rising grass pretty generally. On secluded banks or hills amidst coppice wood, the light blue flowers of the Lesser Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), glistening with dew-drops, present an interesting aspect to the prying eye of the wanderer at this time; and, indeed, even a warm January day will call forth some of its flowers almost as early as those of the Snowdrop. The glossy evergreen leaves present a singular contrast to the blue flowers, and generally trail far and wide. In delicacy of aspect surely no vernal flower can exceed the Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), which now appears studding with its "veined flowers," the sides of romantic ravine-like lanes, amidst stones, and moss, and fern, or not unfrequently its tri-une leaves (said to have been the original Shamrock of St. Patrick) and white drooping flowers cover over the declining moss-covered trunk of a decrepid tree with a wreath of Nature's own approval. Often, fatigued with a long ramble over hill and dale, have we paused in such a locality, to refresh our tongue with the agreeable acid derived from the leaves of this beautiful but retiring plant.

The humbler throng of Flora's train, as the green Mercury, the Dead-nettles, and other *plebii*, we must now, at least, leave undescribed—for every day presents some addition to them. Several *Ranunculi* also appear, but in a general glance at vegetable nature, they only claim attention in their perfect culmination, when their golden tints in broad masses or waving lines, give a feature to the landscape with the contrasted hues of other objects. On the banks of coppices, however, the goldilock Crowfoot (*Ranunculus*

auricomus), when its flowers are in full perfection, often offers a bright point of attraction to the cursory gaze. But it is remarkable that the petals are mostly abortive, and the little hairy-leaved *Ranunculus parviflorus* seldom exhibits more than three petals.

Lady botanists and florists should be now on the alert looking over their pots, mourning over the destruction of winter, replacing the ravages of its icy hand, and giving their poor stunted *Geraniums*, &c., the benefit of light and air, as well as of a warm shower, should it present itself opportunely. They must also, bonnet on head, "look out" in the garden, remembering that if seeds are to come up they must be first sown, and now is the time to begin, if not begun before. The Chinese Primrose (*Primula sinensis*), now looks well, exhibited in full flower in the windows of those who happen to possess it. If fine days (which, however, in this fickle climate it is impossible to guarantee), should continue in any succession, the gardens will be studded with the early vernal flora, the primaveral being hardly yet gone out. Wall-flowers, Anemonies, Early Tulips, Ranunculi, Narcissi, Jonquils, Hepaticas, Gentianellas, and other hardy herbaceous plants, being in full bloom by the middle of the month. In the rustic garden the Crown Imperial (*Fritillaria Imperialis*), and its varieties, now claim a passing attention with its pendant coronals; and what a beautiful appearance is presented on looking WITHIN the flower, and perceiving a lovely milk-white globule in the nectary, at the base of each petal, which retains its place till the flower begins to wither, when it dries up, unless some

bird has previously quaffed the delicious draught, leaving only a depression to mark its former position. It is said that if the petals are deprived of this delicate fluid, the anthers and stigma soon wither, and no seed is produced; so that it seems intended to act as sustenance for the embryo progeny contained after fecundation in the seed-vessel. Phillips, in his "Flora Historica," calls this specious Persian plant, the "Lily of the turbaned countries, which towers above all the flowers of our vernal parterres, throwing up its tall stem amidst the dwarf flowers of April, like the tall Palm amongst trees, or a pagoda arising out of a Chinese town." He observes further, that "this imperial flower is not without its body-guard to keep its admirers at a proper distance; for it possesses so strong a scent of the fox, combined with that of garlic, as to ensure its protection from meddling fingers, and its safety from the saloon vase. It is the same property of the plant, we may presume, that defends it from being rifled of its nectareous juices, which are not only rejected by the bees, but refused by all kinds of insects."

The chequered Fritillary (*Fritillaria meleagris*), now shows its pendulous flowers in some old gardens, or spots that once were gardens; and occasionally the American cowslip (*Dodecatheon Meadia*), adorns the border with its gracefully drooping brilliant lilac umbels. The Double Daisy (*Bellis perennis*, var. *plena flora*)—"O commendable floure," as father Chaucer hath it, is not to be despised in its aspect, at this season, as a border plant; nor its favourite curious rustic variety, the proliferous or Hen-and-Chicken Daisy. There is something extremely pleasing in

entering within the trim enclosure of some old rustic cottage-garden, entrusted to the keeping of a prattling hobbling old dame, whose flower roots and stock of bright red Polyanthus have been kept up from old time, even beyond *her* memory, till the thick grown-up box border, of a century's growth, encloses the auriculas and crocuses within their enclosure like so many Egyptian sarcophagi. Here the old Crown-Imperial is sure to be seen, and many a tuft of *Old-Man*, *Marjoram*, *Sage*, *Hyssop*, and *Lavender*, while a rough rugged time-battered old *Elder* shadows over the ricketty gate at which he stands sentry, or makes a homely arbour at the entrance of the timbered or cracked thatched dwelling.

“ On piled bench, beside the cottage door,
Made up of mud and stones, and sodded o'er;
Where rustic taste at leisure trimly weaves
The rose and straggling woodbine to the eaves,—
And on the crowded spot that pales enclose,
The white and scarlet daisy rears in rows,—
Training the trailing peas in bunches neat,
Perfuming evening with a luscious sweet,—
And sun-flowers, planted for their gilded show,
That scale the window's lattice 'ere they blow;
Then, sweet to habitants within the sheds,
Peep through the diamond panes their golden heads.”

CLARE.

In shrubberies the Laurel (*Cerasus pruno-cerasus*), appears in flower; and at this time bees abound on the Laurels, attracted by the sweet liquor exuding from two glands on the under side of the leaf, which is particularly plentiful on a warm day. Plantations of young Larches, with their fresh green foliage and young pink cones, now make one of the most pleasing exhibitions of spring.

WILD FLOWERS OF APRIL

CONTINUED.

CHAP. VIII.

LEAFAGE OF THE TREES—WILLOW, SYCAMORE, ELM,
PEAR—FLOWERING ORCHARDS—THE COWSLIP—
MARSH-MARIGOLD, BLUEBELL, AND OTHER FLOWERS
—ACCOUNT OF THE ARUM—CLOSING STORM.

“ I never see the broad-leav'd *Arum* spring,
 Stained with spots of jet; I never see
Those dear delights which April still does bring;
 But memory's tongue repeats it all to me.
I view her pictures with an anxious eye;
 I hear her stories with a pleasing pain:
Youth's wither'd flowers, alas! ye make me sigh,
 To think in me ye'll never bloom again.”

CLARE.

SLOWLY, especially in backward springs, proceeds the leafage of the trees, but it does proceed; and ere the month has entirely closed, the proverbial tender green of April is pretty generally diffused over the fields and along the hedges. The fine digitated leaves of the Horse Chesnut, in particular, present, as they expand, an appearance very agreeable to the eye. The young verdure of the Larch, too, has now a very enlivening effect in plantations; here and there a veteran

Hawthorn will be seen with a scanty verdant mantle about his aged loins; and in moist coppices the elegant Birch-tree is arrayed in the most delicate and unsullied frondage. In fact one genial April shower has often such a magical effect, that woods and groves will, in a single day, exchange their sad hibernal aspect for the smiling and exciting look that at once calls us bounding away to the green woods.

A pleasing writer has thus alluded to the foliation of the beech woods of Gloucestershire, which is, of course, applicable to other districts.—“Virgil has elegantly given to the vernal season the epithet of *blushing*, because the shoots and buds of trees assume a ruddy appearance previous to throwing out their leaves. This beautiful effect is very obvious in the deep beech woods of Gloucestershire. Unenlivened by that silver rind and those multifarious tintings that diversify the stem and branches of the birch, they present a dreary appearance through the winter months. But in April a slight change of hue becomes perceptible. A casual observer might ascribe it to a drier air, a clearer atmosphere, or to those transient gleams of sunshine which seem to light up the face of nature with a smile. But the effect arises from that secret renovation which the aged fathers of the forest, and their sapling sons, are now experiencing. The swelling buds are first brown, then bronze, then of a reddish hue, and thus they continue till a light green bough is seen to wave, as if in triumph, from some warm sheltered nook. This is the signal for a general foliation; and he who retires in the evening, casting a look at his beloved woods, rather wishing than ex-

pecting that another week will cover them with leaves, often rejoices the next morning to observe that the whole forest has burst into greenness and luxuriance.”*

The Sycamore is a tree that very early puts forth its fine broad frondage, a beautiful object wherever it stands by the road-side and old farm-house; the Weeping Willow is now also green, and the Hazel and White Willow have their leaves just expanded; the Elm and Pear are beginning to be partially green, but the other forest trees will still remain in a denuded state much longer. April 18th, according to Forster, has been designated as *Ulmifrondes*, or Elm’s-tide, on account of the Elm generally appearing in leaf on this day; but this will only happen in central England in early seasons. The Elm (*Ulmus campestris*) flowers early in March, long before the foliage appears, as does the Witch-Hazel (*Ulmus montana*), a true British denizen, often of distorted aspect, whose hop-like clusters of capsules begin to appear very conspicuous.

The lover of nature, now looking out every morning for fresh objects of attraction, cannot fail to be delighted while he is searching among groves and streams, or toiling up dark stony ravines among the hills, with the successive arrival of the various migratory birds, which always takes place at this cool leafing time. A south-west wind is very favourable to their appearance, and they will thus often be seen in numbers among the trees on the banks of a stream where one was not visible the day before. Thus in certain favourite haunted localities, among violets and prim-

* Annals of my Village, a Calendar of Nature, &c.

roses, where a coppice is divided by a gurgling stream, on a bright April morning the notes of the Nightingale, Titlark, Blackcap, and Willow-Wren, may all be heard in delightful unison, while the pauses of the concert are filled up by the loud *cheer* of the Thrush, or the echoing flourish of the Woodpecker.

Deep in the dangling foliage I beheld
 The sportive Willow-Wren as swift he flew ;
 Down the rough glen by nature's love impell'd
 I follow'd, but he vanish'd from my view ;
 Yet it was lovely in the morning dew
 To see the Bilberry blossoms, and to hear
 From the young verdant foliage, the new
 Song of the Blackcap burst upon the ear
 Midst green romantic dells and splashing waters near.

Here could I linger in the woody glen
 Beneath the beech or pensile birch-tree laid,
 And mark the flowers ;—the modest Woodroof when
 Her milk-white blossoms scent the mossy shade,
 And *Alchemilla's* green ones scarce survey'd,
 Though curious, with her spreading leafy fan,
 With Woodrush's tall tapering silky blade,
 Fair *Vicia's* purple clusters in the van,
 And Strawberry's bunches white, and tall *Alisma's* wan.

Besides the plants here enumerated, the wild yellow Tulip (*Tulipa sylvestris*), is occasionally met with, beautifying dry banks or old quarries; in such rough spots many a lofty spreading Ash stands leafless, yet bearing dark clusters on its branches, which are the naked organs of its fructification. The wild Woodbine has now fully expanded its leaves, and festoons many a hazel with a rich verdant wreath.

By the close of the month, on the average of years, the pear trees in the orchards of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire, present a most beautiful spectacle; and after a light shower, as the sun again breaks through the parting clouds, and picturesque white *cumuli* appear dotting the blue heavens, scarcely any thing can be more exciting than to ramble through a series of pear orchards, the trees white with a profusion of bloom, while the humbeeb bee booms through the air, the *Blackcap* warbles amidst the branches, the Nightingale chirrups among the pollard oaks of the coppice, and the "wandering voice" of the cuckoo, comes floating at intervals up the vale now redolent of fragrance.

The Cowslip (*primula veris*), one of the most beautiful of British plants, now appears dotting the moist meadows, especially upon the *lias* formation; and curiously enough the *lias* may often be traced for miles at this season by the abundant crop of cowslips on its surface, while the adjacent red marl meadows have scarcely any.* The Cowslip has always been a general favourite; and surely a *field of Cowslips*, in the vernal season, is an object on which the eye and the memory rests delighted; for who is there that has not tossed about the cowslip-ball with sportive glee, or brought home in triumph the first expanded one that could be found in the thicket? Then, who does

* The Cowslip is scarcely found in Devonshire, where there is a considerable tract of red marl. But the observation in the text applies to the borders of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

not call to mind the beautiful simile of Shakspeare's, relative to Imogen?—

..... “ On her left breast
A mole, cinque-spotted, *like the crimson drops*
I' the *bottom of a Cowslip*,”—

And recur also to the “ Midsummer Night's Dream,” where these “ crimson drops ” are denominated “ rubies, fairies favours.” Very rarely the Cowslip is found altogether of a bright red colour. Its scent, though weak, is very agreeable; and the wine made from the blossoms is of the sweetest and most harmless in existence—scarcely, indeed, deserving to appear even in the *Index expurgatorius* of a tee-totaller! In some places the children of the peasantry sell the flowers, divested of the ovaria, to some advantage to the wholesale wine-makers.

TO THE COWSLIP.

Cowslip, with thy golden bells
Deck'd with pearls of chrystal lustre,
Fairer than the oyster-shell's,
Hanging in a blooming cluster!

Half afraid in March's train
Trembling from thy couch to rise,
Till young April on the plain
Promises serener skies.

Thee I hail the floral queen,
Filling every meadow wide,—
As upon the stile I lean
Musing on thy golden pride;

Visions rise before my view,
Brilliant as thy golden bells;
Fairer than the ruby hue
That within thy blossom dwells.

Life once seem'd to me as fair
As thy velvet stalk and flower;
As the perfume nestling there,
Now exhaling from the shower.

Let thy perfume lead me back,
As I drink its Lethean stream,
To the bounds of memory's track,
While again I sweetly dream.

In damp meadows the bright specious flowers of the Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), make a fine show with their golden petals:

— “ ’neath the shelving bank’s retreat
The *Horse-blob* swells its golden ball ;”

Here and there a Dandelion, in a snug warm birth, spreads out the *star* of his *order* ; and on the margin of the mossy pool, just within the copse where the thrush is now sitting on her blue-speckled eggs, appears the bitter Cuckoo-flower (*Cardamine amara*), distinguished from its more common conjener by the purple colour of its stamens, and the nauseously bitter taste of its foliage. Almost in the water itself appear the two allied golden Saxifrages (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium et alternifolium*). Trailing on the ground the Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), presents its head of dull blue flowers to view.

But to the wanderer who, at this period of the year, penetrates in the early morning into the dewy copse,

and there pauses, listening to the sounds that rise around him, there is a soothing charm that comes redolent of peace to the chastened spirit, and for a time obliterates the memory of many a care. How simply do they judge who think the botanist has, in his morning's ramble, merely gathered some humble plant on which to employ his systematic or speculative powers. True, he bears some fairy blossom from its hidden retreat, and so far has extended his knowledge; but he has done more than this—he has communed with his own spirit amidst rocks and clouds; and amidst the waving of the trees of the wood, he has heard a voice whose solemn intonations follow his recollections into the common walks of life. The secluded forest has now become the *adytum* of his secret thoughts, where he flies like a wearied bird to its roost; and disappointment and woe only add an increase to the sacred feelings with which he regards it.

Towards the close of the month the Blue-bell (*Scilla nutans*) opens its flowers—Forster intimates on St. George's Day, with which it appears the Blue-bell is associated; but the hue of heaven is not actually profusely transferred to earth by this pretty plant till the brighter days of May appear. Some botanists refer it to the genus *Hyacinthus*, with which its habit more accords than with *Scilla*, according to Dr. Hooker, but it has nothing to do with the Hyacinth of antiquity; and hence Linnæus distinguished it by the term "*non-scriptus*," as having no inscribed characters on its petals. But if it fails in this respect, its beauty on the forest lawn or upland meadow, spangled with the pure dews of the morning, excites

the most rapturous delights, especially to any one deprived for any time of so fair a spectacle.

Clare has associated the Arum or Cuckoo-pint (*Arum maculatum*) with this month. Its leaves often spotted with black, are among the earliest to catch the eye, and its curious flowers surmounted by a purple spadix, and enclosed in a large green hood, like a friar's cowl, have been always the object of popular notice. They bear various familiar names, as "cows and calves," "lords and ladies," &c.; as thus noticed by the Northamptonshire poet.

"How sweet it us'd to be, when April first
 Unclos'd the Arum leaves, and into view
 Its ear-like spindling flowers their cases burst,
 Beting'd with yellowish white or lushy hue;
 Ah, how delighted, humming on the time
 Some nameless song or tale, I sought the flowers;
 Some rushy dyke to jump, or bank to climb
 Ere I obtain'd them; while from hasty showers
 Oft under trees we nestled in a ring,
 Culling our "lords and ladies."—O ye hours."

The Arum appears to have been mentioned by Shakspeare, as "long-purples," though it is generally contended that the immortal bard had the purple Orchis in his view. But the name of "dead-men's fingers," by which the "cold maids" designated the flowers of the plant, decides the question in favour of the Arum, as the flowers of the Orchis would never suggest such an idea; while the flabby club of the *Arum* does present such an analogy. In fact, curiously enough, we have actually in the present day, heard "cold" country damsels, who, probably, had never heard of the existence of Shakspeare, call the Arum

by the name of "dead men's fingers." The cluster of scarlet berries, which in the autumn ripens after the spadix is totally withered, is not generally considered to have sprung from those minute bead-like *ovaria* that, in the early spring, pale, wan, and delicate, charmed the eye in contrast with the deep purple club, at whose base they are so symmetrically ranged. Such are a sample of the plants of April; but the botanist and every body else is now anxiously looking out for May, whose arrival we shall soon have to greet.

But we must close April with a storm—such as must occasionally occur to every "Botanical Explorer," and which has, perhaps, too often exploded upon ourselves when unprepared for it. The hills lour, the sudden blast whirls the pear-tree blossoms far and wide, dense clouds obscure the sun, and deep impervious gloom settles upon all things. And now the hail impetuously rattles upon the heads of the flying rustics; cattle run beneath the old oaks, sheep, in a compact body, take the shelter of a hedge; birds scream, and are lost amid the branches of the dark wood. But where shall *we* fly, for a furious and overwhelming snow-storm drives along, and we are surprised upon the bare hills!—But the clouds fly swifter than the vicissitudes of life—far on the storm pursues its mad career, and resplendent pointed silvery cumuli rise majestically above the black clouds on the western horizon.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR APRIL.

The Botanical Explorator can now delay no longer to commence his collecting labours in earnest; and hence, perhaps, it may be advantageous to the neophyte, to give him an idea of the apparatus he should be furnished with. A tin box has been generally recommended for putting plants into when gathered, but though this is convenient for *Mosses* and *Fungi*, or *Jungermanniæ* and *Marchantiæ*, it is very detrimental to the beauty of delicate flowers, especially if *any number* be collected, which have thus to be jammed together in one heterogeneous mass. I have, therefore, long laid the tin box aside, with the exception just adverted to, and in its stead, I recommend a folio or quarto blank book of cartridge, brown, or thick cap paper to be carried. The cover of this may be of leather, green canvass, or simply half bound, according to individual taste, but the paper within should be interspersed with a number of what bookbinders term "guards," which will allow of many plants being placed within the book without increasing its thickness. Plants thus placed between the leaves of the Collecting Book, may be preserved for examination for several days without detriment, though it will be advisable to shift them into fresh papers as early as possible, and *dry the leaves of the book*.

As it is expedient in many cases to get up plants by their roots, which are often a considerable depth in hard gravelly soil or stiff clay, a large case-knife should be carried for this purpose; or what is better still, a *Digger* should be obtained from some ironmongers. This will probably have to be ordered on purpose, and consists of a broad stiff

blade six or eight inches in length, fastened into a strong handle, and fitted with a stout leather sheath. It would not be amiss to have a smaller book or old pamphlet which could go in the breast pocket, for the more delicate plants; and this, with a magnifying glass hung round the neck, and Smith's Compendium of the English Flora, in the pocket, will complete the equipment absolutely necessary for the practical Explorer. A sporting Jacket of a dark hue is perhaps the best external covering for the traversing of bogs and thickets, and this should have besides its external pockets, one or two withinside sufficiently large to contain the collecting book.

WILD FLOWERS OF MAY.

CHAP. IX.

SEASONAL VARIATIONS IN THE FLOWERING OF PLANTS
—SIX FLOWERING PERIODS DESCRIBED IN DETAIL,
THE PRIMAVERAL, VERNAL, SOLSTITIAL, ÆSTIVAL,
AUTUMNAL, AND HIBERNAL.

“ Let mother Earth now deck'd with flowers be seen,
And sweet-breath'd Zephyrs curl the meadows green.”

DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

“ Methought fresh May before my bed upstode,
In weed depaint of many diverse hue,
Sober, benign, and full of mansuetude,
In bright attire of flouris forged new,
Heavenly of color, white, red, brown, and blue,
Balmy in dew, and gilt with Phœbus bemys.”

CHAUCER.

BEFORE gathering “ May-flowers ” it will be convenient to subdivide the garland of the year into characteristic *Floras*, which may perhaps be made more tangible by the peculiar flowers comprised within them, than the mere artificial divisions of the months. They will also be more natural, as these *Floras* will of course remain the same whether the seasons be earlier or later ; while even in successive years there is often

a very considerable difference in the dates of flowering of many plants, according to the mildness or severity of the weather. Thus in the stormy and ungenial springs of 1837 and 1839, the Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), which in average seasons usually blooms about the middle of April, was not in flower till May 1st, although in the very hot spring of 1840, I noticed it in flower at Stanton in Worcestershire on April 1st. The Hawthorn (*Cratægus oxyacantha*), which is in many springs at least partially in flower on May-Day, only commenced flowering to my observation in 1837 on May 26th, for in a communication I made in that year to "The Naturalist,"* I penned this remark—"May 26. Noticed a Hawthorn-bush in flower for the first time this year, but in a ride of thirty miles it was the *only one* so circumstanced." The Hawthorn was almost equally late in coming into flower in 1839, while in 1840 it was observed in flower in Worcestershire on April 25th, and on the 1st of May was copiously in blossom. The Pear Orchards ought in genial seasons to be copiously in flower in the second week in April, continuing till the middle of May; but in 1837 the Pear-trees were not fully in flower till May 15th, although in 1840 their flowering was *over* by the 1st of May, when the Apple-trees, generally a fortnight later, were in their primest perfection. The Horse Chesnut usually displays its splendid thyrsi of flowers the latter end of April and beginning of May, but in 1837 this tree only came into flower on May 25th. Thus temperature, and the occurrence or non-occurrence of bitter frosts and ungenial storms in

* A Periodical, then edited by Neville Wood, Esq., but since discontinued.

April and May, make a great difference in the aspect of the *Flora Spectabilis*, for while in 1839 the bitter frosts of April and May so cut up the vernal flowers, that Lilac and Laburnum scarcely exhibited their flowers at all, and while in 1837 they only displayed their beauty in the middle of June; on May 6th, 1840, both shone in the shrubberies with the utmost gorgeous effulgence and profusion. I find the following observation in my Journal for 1837, and the foliage was almost equally backward in 1839. "May 13.—Alder not in leaf except very partially; Ash, no signs of opening foliage apparent; Beech, the leaves only fully expanded this day; Birch, young leaves just expanded; Elm, leaves expanding, but scarcely open, general aspect denuded; Hawthorn, the hedges not yet entirely green, and no sign of blossom anywhere; Hazel, not in leaf except here and there; Horse-chesnut, the foliage fully out, but not any flowers; Lime, only just opening; Maple, buds as yet only apparent; Pear, leaves only partially expanded; Sycamore, merely in young leaf; Willow, young foliage just apparent only; Service, (*Pyrus torminalis*), entirely leafless: Oak, totally bare." The latter tree was quite devoid of foliage as well as the Ash on May 29, 1839, and yet in 1840, so hot and cloudless was the weather in April, the thermometer rising in the shade at 3 p.m. to 72°, that the leafage of the trees was nearly accomplished in a single week, from April 18th to April 25th, on which latter day I noticed even the oak in young foliage; and the Ash, seldom in full leaf till June, exhibited expanded foliage in many instances on May 1st. Both it, and the pea-green Acacia, had

copious leafage on May 5th. Thus in this year the frondescence of trees, which in general begins with the aquatic kinds, was almost reversed; at any rate the Willows, Poplars, and Alders put forth their leaves in company with the Lime, Beech, and Oak. The Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), is very characteristic of our transient summer, which can never be said to be established till the perfume of its sulphur umbels loads the evening air, and this frequently happens the last week in May, but in 1839 the flowers were not even expanded till June 17th. *June 17th 1843*

In this way the flowering of plants and trees may be expected to vary each year in their *precise* times; and the noting of this, and its connection with the appearance of the migratory birds, will always be a source of amusement, instruction, and enjoyment, to the observant naturalist.

Foster, in his "Perennial Calendar" and other works relative to the periodical flowering of plants, has indicated *six* distinct seasonal periods, to each of which respectively a certain number of the species indigenous to or naturalized in Britain belong. These I shall now proceed to enumerate, and though it must be expected that many plants will appear in more than one portion, or connect one with another, yet on the whole I think it advantageous to adopt Forster's nomenclature, premising that in his view each period has its *culmination*, on "maximum of flowering beauty," when of course its aspect will best appear in contrast with the culmination of its neighbour. "As individual plants may be noted as flowering, culminating, and deflowering, according as they first open,

arrive at full maturity, and fade, so the same may be said of the aggregate of flowers of each particular season, technically termed Floras. And this is the best method we can adopt for illustrating the face of nature, at each of the six principal periods of the revolving year.”* The periods characterized by Forster, are as follows, but to render the subject more intelligible, I have somewhat enlarged and further illustrated his minor details. The various indications of the approach of the seasons, constitute, as he observes, a subject of considerable interest; and they are to be deduced principally from the periodical return of certain natural phenomena, such as the re-appearance of the birds of passage, the pairing of animals, the flowering of plants, and the ripening of fruits. Let us now examine the divisions adverted to.

I. THE PRIMAVERAL FLORA.

II. THE VERNAL.

III. THE SOLSTITIAL.

IV. THE ÆSTIVAL.

V. THE AUTUMNAL.

VI. THE HIBERNAL.

The *Primaveral* Flora may be said to commence with the first breaking of the frost before February. It comprehends the “first pale blossom of the year,”—the Snowdrop, the Crocus, the argent though humble *Draba verna*, the Golden Saxifrages and some

* Forster's Perennial Calendar, 8vo. p. 141.

other cruciferous flowers, the specious though afterwards rank and dissightly Coltsfoot, the Anemonies

“ From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed ;”

the ever-exciting Violets and Primroses on their well remembered banks, and all the tribe of Daffodils, Narcissi, Jonquils, Hyacinths, and many others. In the woods the golden catkins of the Sallow, as well as those of the Hazel, are predominant and characteristic.

The *Vernal* Flora may be considered as introduced by the Lady-smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), which in warm spots is in flower by Lady-day, March 21st., though its culmination does not take place before a month afterwards. Now “ the love-sick Cowslip that the head inclines,” appears beautifying the meadows; moist pastures become resplendent with the golden stars of of the Pilewort (*Ficaria verna*); in the marshes the Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) is seen from afar; and Dandelions become very numerous, marking the later period of this flora with their conspicuous white clocks. On the margin of woods the early Purple Orchis (*O. mascula*), becomes a brilliant object of attraction. Towards the close of April, or about St. George’s Day, April 23rd, the carpet of the woodlands assumes a fresh aspect with the brilliant blue of the wild Hyacinth or English Blue-bell; the golden Broom beautifies the thickets, the Mountain-Ash the woods; many *Ranunculi* spangle particular meadows, and in others a profusion of the Meadow Orchis (*O. morio*) has a very beautiful effect. In the garden the Tulip is now the “ Queen of Beauty,” while the shrubberies around are fragrant with the Lilac, or resplendent with the Laburnum This is

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of
the
Middle of
June
1843
April 30
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the favourite season with the poets, the flowering thickets being now vocal with the songs of all the migratory warblers.

————— “ I hail the time of Flowers,
When Heaven is fill'd with music sweet
Of birds among the bowers.”*

The Germander-Speedwell, rivalling with its azure hue the brilliant Blue-bell, is another attendant upon the Vernal Flora, as is the odorous Wall-Flower, the Columbine, the Globe-Flower, the Peonies, and the blue Garden Iris (*I. Germanica*.) The culmination of the Vernal Flora is marked by the flowering of the Hawthorn, whose stainless clusters breathe such fragrance on the balmy evenings of this period; and where dwarf decrepid individuals cover the declivities of hills like aged pilgrims with flowing silver locks, the ground seems in the dubious twilight as if strewed with newly fallen snow.

The approach of the *Solstitial* Flora is indicated by the appearance of the great White Midsummer Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*); and may be said to be actually apparent when the common Yellow Flag (*Iris Pseudacorus*) gilds the marshes, Poppies flame in the gardens, and the *Lychnis flos cuculi* and Yellow Rattle diversify the meadows. Delicious fragrance, too, fills the air from the masses of Honeysuckle Clover widely dispersed in the fields.

“ Now flames the grass with vegetable gold
Where yellow Buttercups their flowers unfold.”

The Grasses have attained their full perfection, and the aspect of the woods and thickets covered with

* Logan.

frondage and intertwined with Roses and Honey-suckles, diffusing the most delicious scents, is incomparable. Pinks, Carnations, Sweet Williams, and Lilies, now display the utmost pomp of confirmed summer in the garden, while the brilliant St. John's Worts and golden Cistus (*C. helianthemum*), accurately mark the Solstitial time on exposed banks and woods open to the sun. The Foxglove is now a noble ornament to sandy lanes; rocks and roofs are overlaid with the gold of the Stonecrops (*Sedum*), and the Mallows, Chamomiles, and Bindweeds, follow with their white or purple bells. *Verbascums* are also conspicuous. The Solstitial Flora lasts from the beginning of June to July 15th.*

“ Now comes July, and with his fervid noon
Unsinews labour.”

Hence the *Æstival* or advanced Summer Flora presents itself, characterized by the Cockle (*Agrostemma Githago*), and golden *Chrysanthemum* among the corn; the Hawk-weeds and Bell-flowers on rocks and walls; and the Meadow-sweet (*Spiræa ulmaria*), and Purple Loosestrife (*Lythra salicaria*), beside rills and banks of rivers. Wild heaths, wastes, and commons, so black and horrific amidst the storms of winter, have now assumed a purple robe of exquisite beauty with the innumerable flowers of the *Calluna vulgaris*, and

* This period in the midland and southern counties of England, includes the hay-harvest, which, says Stillingfleet, in his “Calendar of Flora,” begins with the flowering of the Lime, clover being out of blow, and yellow-rattle or coxcomb, shedding its seeds.

the still more delicate and beautiful hues of the blossoms of the *Ericæ* (Heaths), and *Andromeda polifolia*. In the garden the lofty Holyhocks (*Althea*), the Sun-flowers, African Marygolds, China Asters, &c. &c., present an aspect of regal magnificence. In rocky spots, perhaps, the flowering of the Clematis or Virgin's Bower (*C. vitalba*), is the most decisive indication that the *Æstival* Flora has attained its culmination, while the universal substitution of the flowers of the Bramble for those of the Rose proclaims the same event. The berries of the Mountain Ash, Hawthorn, and Guelder Rose, now become evidently coloured, and add a pleasing tint to the foliage of the hedge and shrubbery, though intimating that already summer verges to decay.

The *Autumnal Flora* begins to present itself as soon as the Meadow-Saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*), shows its naked pale purple flowers conspicuously in the meadows, which is generally the last week in August. The autumnal Dandelion (*Apargia autumnalis*), now also throws a faint tinge of gold along the pastures; and damp spots in woods are empurpled with the culmination of the Devil's-bit Scabious (*Scabiosa succisa*). On moist commons or the sandy sea-shore the scented Triple Ladies' Traces (*Neottia spiralis*), now presents itself sometimes in great abundance, and the *Aster tripolium* exhibits its purple rays along the muddy beaches of rivers within reach of the tide. In the garden the Michaelmas Daisy is a very characteristic feature of this floral period, which closes with the flowering of the sombre Ivy, on whose green umbels

numerous insects alight to derive the last sustenance the dying year has in reserve for them.

Without the fields have been entirely burnt up by the heats of summer, Mushrooms and numerous other *Fungi* will be daily spangling the green fields often in very conspicuous rings; while within the woods crowds of them of almost every colour will be visible upon the ground. The orchards show their rosy-streaked products in splendid perfection at this time, though autumnal gales arising whirl thousands of leaves about in the air; and the foliage of all deciduous trees fading into parti-coloured brilliance, gives an aspect of singular though melancholy magnificence to the face of nature. The ground now becomes every where crisp and leaf-strown, berries of numerous kinds, especially the Hawthorn and Mountain-Ash, glisten in the dews of morning, and every brambly hedge is loaded with clustering Blackberries. A colder temperature is now very evident, and thick fogs prevailing in the morning, involve all things in their reeking folds.

From the end of November to the beginning of February, is the period of the *Hibernal Flora*, if, indeed, it deserves the appellation of *Flora* at all. The realm of flowers, sacked and desolated by the autumnal gales, lies in a state of ruin and desecration, scarcely any thing but withered stalks appear in the gardens; and, as Foster remarks in his "Indications of the Seasons,"—"almost all nature seems at length to slumber, and till the Holly and Ivyberries of Christmas enliven our houses, every thing seems sombre and uninviting." Yet, abroad, all is not barren, for many curious spe-

cies of *Pezizæ*, *Auriculariæ*, *Tremellinæ*, &c., luxuriate in the damp atmosphere, and even scent it very agreeably. *Mosses* and *Lichens* are attaining their utmost perfection and luxuriance with every brumal storm,—rocks, roofs, and precipices become green and beautiful with them, and the mountain turf displays a host of *Jungermanniæ*, whose black globular-headed *theceæ* glisten upon pellucid stalks, amidst their matted bright green foliage.

Even amidst the tempests of this brumal season, a few stray members of Flora's train may be traced; and, in gardens, the sweet Coltsfoot (*Tussilago fragrans*), flowers, and the Christmas Rose (*Helleborus niger*). In the woods, the Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*) is almost the only plant that gives any token of vegetable life, by showing a disposition to flower, except that here and there, a Gorse-Bush, with its yellow buds glazed in ice, gives a promise of what a few hours of genial sunshine might perform. But every thing now becomes obscured in sleet and rain, severe frosts set in, or snow covers the earth, till yielding before the milder influences of February; when, at Candlemas, the Primaverall Flora, with which we commenced, again comes round in its turn. Thus, as has been well remarked, "in this, our temperate climate, have we a round of Botanical amusements all the whole year, and the Botanist can never want for sources of recreation."* In connection with the thoughts and inspirations awakened by the glories of nature throughout the various seasons of the year, the Botanical

* Perennial Calendar, by T. Forster, F.L.S.

Explorator will, in his solitary rambles, often recal the glowing language of one of nature's inspired interpreters, especially, adopting as his own, the following noble apostrophe, from an ode of the author of "The Excursion."

"And O ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Think not of any severing of our loves !
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your weight ;
I only have relinquish'd one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet ;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an age
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
*To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.*" *

* Ode-Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood.

WILD FLOWERS OF MAY

CONTINUED.

CHAP. X.

SCIENTIFIC AND POETICAL FLORAL INFLUENCES—
SCENES OF PAST WANDERINGS—MAY FLOWERS ON
THE WELSH MOUNTAINS AND COTSWOLD HILLS—
DANDE LION AND OTHER FIELD FLOWERS—HAW-
THORN—HORSE-CHESNUT AND OTHER FOREST TREES.

“The meadow by the river seems a *sea*
Of liquid silver, with the cuckoo-flowers ;
And here and there where midst the smiling lea
Caltha in green and gold refulgent towers,
Islets of splendour shine, whose radiance pours
A glory o’er the scene ;—a magic spell
Would tempt me to forget the passing hours,
And in the copse that overlooks the dell,
’Midst primroses and cowslips for a season dwell.”—MS.

The botanist may look out upon nature with a scientific or poetical eye—he may either store his herbarium with specimens classified according to the most approved nomenclature, and form his catalogue with a view to claim the notice of the initiated only ; or

with more enlarged views he may awaken general attention, by connecting the objects of his study with those allusions which can scarcely fail to penetrate to the feelings even of the most unsusceptible. At all events the re-awakening of vernal life, and the bright succession of flowers that now daily rise up, has an exciting influence upon the mind, and it insensibly reverts back to those bright oases of the memory, when

“Thoughts themselves were stars, and birds, and flowers.”

The same recurrence of images to the eye, still calls up the buoyant feelings of old days, while one spark of sensibility remains to warm the heart; for nature still ever revolving, nevertheless displays again the same flowery forms and scents that once taught the swelling heart to bound with irrepressible enthusiasm. Hence it is that the sight of *vernal* flowers cannot fail to call up some blissful emotion in every breast, because memory hurries us back to the first vernal flowers that we ran tottering to pluck, or displays the polythanthus we were wont to water in our little garden, or the gaudy flower that beyond our reach, we earnestly entreated an indulgent and beloved parent to pluck for us. These are incidents that all are familiar with; and simple as they are, they affect us because they recal the purest and best sympathies of our nature. Who can fail to be moved with Wordsworth's description of the “trembling, earnest company” of little ones, “each with a vernal posy at his breast,” who are represented by him as standing round their reverend pastor in the untried character of

catechumens. Himself one of that innocent band, he thus beautifully apostrophizes in reference to it:—

“ How flutter’d then thy anxious heart for me,
Beloved Mother ! Thou whose happy hand
Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie :
Sweet flowers ! at whose inaudible command
Her countenance, phantom-like, doth re-appear :
O lost too early for the frequent tear,
And ill requited by this heart-felt sigh !”

This month, with its buds and its birds, and its fresh green bowers, may well excuse this exhibition of poetical feeling on our part, since in all probability, as the summer comes on, we shall lose every trace of it, and become as dry as parched peas (a legitimate botanical simile this), long before the dog days ! But unless the season be very ungenial, the extreme beauty and freshness of vegetation at this time awakens sensations of buoyant delight in every breast not absolutely prostrate before disease or despair, while yielding to the excitation of the brilliant scene, we may exclaim with Ambrose Phillips—

“ Have ye seen the broider’d May
All her scented bloom display,
Breezes op’ning ev’ry hour,
This and that expecting flower,
While the mingling birds prolong
From each bush the vernal song ?”

“ May flowers” are proverbial—but where shall we look for them?—on the bold sides of the majestic Silurian Malverns, from whence the *pear trees* of Worcester-shire, and the *apple trees* of Herefordshire, in their

rival blooms of stainless white and rose, present a sight the world cannot equal?—*there* we have been. Shall we trace them beside the gravelly torrent of the romantic Usk, or on the huge “Black Mountains” that flank its lovely valley with their awful barrier?—*there* we have been. Shall we look down on the bright plain of Salop, and from the black *bladder-stone* of the craggy *Wrekin* trace them in the green woods that fill the romantic hollow between that hill and the long edge of Wenlock, the silvery horse-shoes of the Severn gleaming lovely amidst the foliage? *there* we have been. Shall we trace them by the beauteous Medway, amidst its deep woods, between Rochester and Maidstone; or slumber as we once slumbered in life’s inexperienced morn among the cherry orchards of Kent; and from the chalky hills of Boxley, look down in fancy upon a scene we can *now* tread no more? Shall we gaze from Snowdon, Idris, or Plinlimmon?—winter has scarcely left those bleak heights; though high among the rocks, where we have also been, the *Rhodiola rosea*,* at least, is pushing

* This curious plant shows how Nature delights in anomalies, and proves, perhaps, as much as any other, the difficulty of bending every thing to the procrustean system of man. The usual number of stamens is eight, and as the barren and fertile plants are most commonly on *different* individuals, of course the *Rhodiola rosea* is entitled to rank with the *Diæcia octandria*. Here, accordingly, it is generally placed by Linnæan botanists, yet Linnæus himself, from the circumstance of finding hermaphrodite specimens in Lapland, originally placed the genus in *Polygamia*. Sir W. J. Hooker justly remarks that it agrees with *Sedum* in every thing but the number of parts, having the habit of *Sedum telephium*, and flowers often presenting themselves with five petals and ten stamens. Schræber, De Condolle, and Dr. Lindley, have accordingly classed it as a *Sedum*, under the name of *S. rhodiola*. No doubt some of the flowers, (as in a fine living plant I gathered and brought home from Cadair Idris,) have ten stamens, and as I likewise observed this to

forth its succulent leaves, and just showing its pale green petals amidst ferns and dripping mosses. There, too, amidst fearful crags, like a roseate gleam before sunrise, the purple and moss Saxifrages (*S. oppositifolia* and *hypnoides*), spread their lowly but exquisitely delicate gems.—Shall the Isle of Wight, with its steep chalky cliffs, fringed with *Samphire*; or the fair fields of Devon, *where no Cowslips grow*, again claim our presence? Shall we dash among the wild cataracts of Glamorgan, beauteous with the crimson drooping blossoms of the Water-avens (*Geum rivale*); or climb, with daring step, the fearful crags of Craig

occur in the central flower of the cyme, perhaps we may consider the other flowers as defective from abortion; but this would only remove the plant to *Diœcia decandria*. And even on the much lauded "Natural System," there would be much difficulty to a student in examining a plant so irregular in the number of its parts as this, and assigning its correct position. The "*Crassulaceæ*" are indeed succulent plants, but from the detailed account of the order, a novice could hardly presume the *Rhodiola* to rank here if he had a barren plant, and even with a fertile one, he would find on investigating the genera of the *Crassulaceæ*, that none of their *assigned* characters, agreed with those of the plant he was investigating. So that even with an anomalous plant like the present, a clue would be far easier discovered by which the truth could be detected by the Linnæan than the natural method. For the student finding eight stamens almost always constant, if foiled in Octandria, would suspect at once the plant might be diœcious, from its imperfect fructifying organs, and thus be quickly conducted to the fact. It is remarkable that all botanical authors, from Linnæus to Withering and Hooker, affirm the colour of the flowers to be *yellow*, and they are so coloured in Sowerby's English Botany; yet, strange as it may appear, all these great authorities are certainly incorrect, for in my Welsh plant with five perfectly developed cymes of flowers, not one was yellow at any period of blooming, and the anthers are only purplish, as represented in Sowerby, when in an immature state. At a little distance, indeed, the *cymes* have a bright golden aspect, but, on a close inspection, this is seen to arise from the copious *yellow pollen* that completely covers the protruding anthers, combined with the nectarles that glow at the base of the narrow concave petals, like minute drops of the richest amber. But the petals themselves, as well as the calyx, are light green. The flowers have a strong scent like that of peppermint water.

Breidden, in Montgomeryshire, to gather once more the white cinquefoil (*Potentilla rupestris*), on the only hill in Britain where its stainless flowers charm the gaze? Shall we mount the fortress-like Steiper-Stones, or the basaltic Clee hills, in proud Salopia, for the *yellow violet*, pluck the flossy cotton grasses upon the bogs of the lofty Brecon Fans, or rest in the calm sunny noon amidst the dark ever-verdant thickets that clothe the famed Box-hill? The "Botanical Explorer" must progress in turn to a hundred scenes like these, or rest for a season near the vale of Gloucester, the countless villas of fair Cheltenham intermixed with the foliage of the vales, and the dark belt of Cotswolds rising in theatrical pomp, as a fine background that at present meets our view. For we are now upon the long indented Cotswold ridge, bristling with broken oolitic crags, and adorned with the specious though somewhat rough blue flowers of the Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*), and the glistening white ones of the *Arabus hirsuta*. The wind blusters about the solitary pile of the "Devil's Chimney," on Leckhampton hill, threatening the unwary wanderer with loss of hat, while stumbling amidst the stones of this æolian region;—but the eye delights in the vast amphitheatre bending far on either hand, while below, a thousand lines of light chase each other over the variegated landscape. Many a grey and many a white tower flash in brightness, or sink in shadow, as the light clouds dash on, while sternly solemn, purpleal Malvern frowns throughout his long broken crest in the far distance. In this stony vicinity, the clustered Bell-flower (*Campanula glomerata*), the little Snap-

dragon (*Linaria minor*), and blue *Gentiana amarella*, may be found; while in the belt of wood between this and a broken cromlech and barrow above Shurdington, the *Pyrus aria* and *Viburnum lantana* exhibit their white clusters and silvery foliage. But now to the more general features of fair May.

“Bring me those flowers,” then, as Shakspeare makes Paris exclaim, in *Romeo and Juliet*—and here they are. Shall we look out upon the fields?—there the starry brilliant Dandelions cover the meads with a robe of gold, to be soon succeeded by an ermine mantle of *white clocks*.

“Dandelion this,
A college youth that flashes for a day,
All gold; anon he doffs his gaudy suit,
Touch’d by the magic hand of some grave bishop,
And all at once, by commutation strange,
Becomes a reverend divine. How sleek!
How full of grace!—that *globous wig*
So nicely trimm’d.”

Common as this object is, how beautiful its mechanism when examined as it deserves to be. When the golden florets wither, and the calyx shuts up, the seeds are not ready for the purpose nature designs them, therefore the withered florets, twisted in a mass, keep off the rain, while the pillar of the seed-down grows to its full length, and then they are pushed off; the pillars still rising, bear upon the calyx, which now gently expands, while, at the same time, the receptacle altering its form from concave to convex, the calyx is more and more deflexed, till at length its

segments are pushed parallel with the stalk,—and the *globe of down* is complete in its beauty, ready and anxious for that mystic flight which spreads its progeny abroad upon the earth. The *Daisies* now show their argent rays tipped with crimson, in the acmè of their beauty, for their lines of silver will now soon be lost before the more gorgeous sway of millions of golden Buttercups. In orchards a beautiful pale liloid flower now presents itself, the two-flowered Narcissus (*N. biflorus*), often by the first of the month ; the red Lychnis, or Campion (*L. diurna*), begins to beautify the sides of hedges, and the Cowslips gradually *going out*, are relieved by an abundant crop of the meadow Orchis (*O. morio*), and hosts of *Blue-bells*, that give the hue of the azure heavens for a short space to the fields of earth. The May-weed too, or Cow-parsley (*Chærophyllum sylvestre*), covers some pastures, and the white Stichwort (*Stellaria holosteum*) shines, while under the banks of coppices the “blue-eyed Speedwell” charms the eye, the lesser Periwinkle spreads a tracery of green leaves and blue cups, and the curious Weasel-snout (*Galeobdolon luteum*), blooms around. Now, too, the woods are at last *green*, oak and ash excepted ; and the *May* or Whitethorn is sparingly in flower. After a moderately warm April, nothing can be more beautiful than the aspect of the country, white with Hawthorn hedges, rising copiously into flower in every direction, while the gale wafts their fragrance far and wide. But though hedges are a comparatively modern innovation, the Whitethorn is an old English denizen, long loved and honoured, and, formerly,

every village and mansion had its favourite old Thorn, or Bush—

“The hawthorn-bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking, age, and whispering lovers, made.”

Where these monuments of days of yore have been suffered to remain as relics of the past, they have attained a considerable size. A very lofty branched tree stands in a neglected spot at Forthampton Cottage, Gloucestershire, with a conjoined triple bole, all moss and lichen-covered, and probably more than four centuries old. I also remember several very fine ones, ivy-cinctured, and with innumerable tortuous arms, on the feathery summit of the Little Skirrid, near Abergavenny, Monmouthshire—but never have I seen this reverend tree's grey locks more beautiful than amid the southern trenches of the camp on the summit of the Salopian Wrekin, where numerous old trees lie scattered, of the slow growth of centuries. My memory doats upon a blissful afternoon I once spent there, dozing on the sunny bank, and ever and anon looking upon the “siller gray” thorns, the tremendously rugged glacis of the hill fortress, and below upon the glorious vale, serpentized by the sparkling Severn, and bounded beyond by the rich groves of Buildwas, and the indented waving ridge of Wenlock. Those were young days of toil, sorrow, but enthusiasm, when poetry burnt me up, and the following inspired lines were truly deeply felt, as by the Scotian bard who indited them.

“O happy love, where love like this is found,
 O heartfelt raptures, bliss beyond compare ;
 I've paced much this weary mortal round,
 And sage experience bids me this declare :
 If heav'n a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
 One cordial in this melancholy vale,
 'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair
 In other's arms breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white Thorn that scents the evening gale.”

The Horse-Chesnuts now put forth their splendid spikes of flowers, magnificent in aspect, for they are often in such profusion as at a little distance to give each tree the resemblance of one gigantic bouquet.

———“The thick Chesnut gloriously array'd ;
 For in its honour prodigal Nature weaves
 A princely vestment, and profusely showers
 O'er its green masses of broad palmy leaves,
 Ten thousand waxen pyramidal flowers ;
 And gay and gracefully its head it heaves
 Into the air, and monarch-like it towers,
 Dimming all other trees.” *

The Ash, Beech, Birch, Alder, Oak, Scotch Fir, Sycamore, Maple, and many other forest trees are in bloom. On various heathy hills, also, the common Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), is now in flower, with the last year's berries on it still green ; for in this country they are biennial. Several grasses now show their spikes, and “Jack-by-the-hedge” (*Erysimum Alliaria*), sprinkles hedge banks with a border of milky hue. The pretty *Geranium lucidum* now spreads abundantly with its

* William and Mary Howitt's Forest Minstrel.

bright red stalks, the Bush-vetch (*Vicia sepium*), shows itself, as well as the little Bird's-foot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*), and the purple flowers of the bitter heath Vetch. We have now reached the middle of the *vernal* season—fresh flowers, too numerous to recount, are daily springing up—the cuckoo sings all day, the nightingale all night—the weather is fair and “seasonable,” and every thing looks daily more and more beautiful.

WILD FLOWERS OF MAY

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XI.

THE BONNY BROOM—FLOWERS OF THE UPLAND WOOD
AND ITS TINKLING RILLS—THOSE OF THE RUINED
ABBAY—THE BOG—THE GARDEN—SKETCH OF THE
LILAC—MAY WEED—HERB PARIS—APPLE ORCHARDS
IN FLOWER—TULIP BEDS AND VALUE OF THEIR BULBS
—MOUNTAIN AND WOOD FLOWERS—FLOAT ON THE
WATER.

“Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us: ——— mark how spring
Our tender plants.”—MILTON.

“Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.”

MILTON'S LYCIDAS.

THE wood, the open country, and the garden, are
all now equally delightful. “Flowers of all hue,”
attend upon us at every step. In the wild glen the
“bonny bonny Broom” (*Cytisus scoparius*), covers
every slope with golden veins, recalling the glowing
language of *Burns*, and many a pleasant recollection.

“Their groves of sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
Where bright beaming summers exalt the perfume;
Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green breckan,
Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom.”

In the upland wood a thousand Bilberries (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), droop their rosy bells, and a booming host of "red-hipt humble-bees" are attendant upon them; the Mountain Ash (*Pyrus aucuparia*), displays its white clusters on the hill; the wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*), in the limestone copse, and the guelder rose (*V. opulus*), fringes the borders of brawling brooks. In the open field the elegant little Ladies' Mantle (*Alchemilla vulgaris*) charms the eye; and the varied flowers of the white Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*), and the meek blue ones of the Scorpion Grass (*Myosotis sylvatica*), have a lovely effect. The woods are now glorious with their fresh and green umbrageous multitude of leaves; and within their cool recesses how delightful now to pass the noontide hour. There the blue Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*), now adorns the scene; the Woodroof (*Asperula odorata*), fills the air with fragrance; and the delicate Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*), droops its stainless bells. The mountain Veronica (*V. montana*), a great lover of the shade, adorns with its pale blue flowers the ground of the wood, contrasted here and there with the yellow Pimpernel, and the deeper blue of the Milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*). The tinkling rill that slowly winds its way amidst a labyrinth of Briars, is profusely covered with the snowy clusters of the ramsons or broad-leaved Garlick (*Allium ursinum*), and the tall Comfrey (*Symphytum officinalis*), is conspicuous by the river, with its curled corollas of dingy purple and long-pointed rough leaves. In the same locality the shaggy spikes of the great river Carex (*C. riparia*), present themselves, forming thickets where the black-

headed bunting loves to hide, and on whose tall stems the quick-darting dragon-flies, or orange-tipt butterflies love to rest; while the gravelly shallows glitter with the silver flowers of the water Crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis*), that spread their white stars in countless multitudes, By the sides of roads the red flowers of the Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*), begin to make a conspicuous appearance.

Now suppose we have wandered close to the crumbling walls of some ivy-invested ruined abbey—there beauteous amidst desolation and decay the Wall-flower (*Cheiranthus cheiri*), spreads odours on the balmy wing of morning, the yellow flowered Barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*), appears on the wall, and the ivy-leaved Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum cymbalaria*), droops her purple blossoms in luxuriant profusion, while amidst the rubbish of broken tombs and tracery, the great Celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), shows her golden but fugacious flowers. May “from her green lap throws” many other beautiful and characteristic flowers—among these we may mention, in boggy places, the Red-rattle (*Pedicularis sylvatica*), conspicuous with its bright pink flowers rising from amidst the green moss; broad-leaved Orchis (*Orchis latifolia*), the lovely fringed water Buckbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), and the *Eriophori*, or Cotton-grasses, which, waving their downy silvery tresses before the breeze like a cloud of snow-flakes, present a charming spectacle to every adventurer in the vicinity of mountainous scenery.

Towards the close of the month the Burnet Rose (*Rosa spinosissima*), presents her milk-white delicately scented flower, a week or two before her sisters of the

same family ; and now, at last, the Hawthorn (*Mespilus oxyacantha*) puts on its snowy attire in full perfection, and filling the country far and wide with fragrance, "with his locks o' siller grey" dots the landscape with indescribable beauty. This is so favourite a tree with me, that I cannot forbear to quote Howitt's sweet lines upon it, breathing fragrance delicious as the unsullied May itself, in his "Forest Minstrel."—

"The *beautiful Hawthorn*, that has now put on
Its summer luxury of snowy wreaths ;
Bending its branches in exuberant bloom,
While to the light enamour'd gale it breathes,
Rife as its loveliness, its rathe perfume :
Glory of England's landscape ! favourite tree
Of bard and lover ! it flings far and free
Its grateful incense : whether you arise
To catch the first long sun-gleam in the skies,
And list the earliest bird-notes ; whether you
Linger amidst the twilight and the dew—
There, through the silent air its odour strays,
Sweet as in home-scenes of our earliest days."

Who can forget, in reference to the Hawthorn, that matchless verse of Burns, where he describes the happy lovers seated

"Beneath the milk-white Thorn that scents the evening gale."

If, however, any lady is so fastidious as to object to our (of course platonic) effusions "beneath the milk-white Thorn," we beg to move an adjournment to the garden, where, perhaps, the shade of some dark "lover's walk," of Yew, Hazel, or Honeysuckle, may be found equally convenient for meditation. Here, looking out from our pleasing position, what inspiring

objects meet the view. The Lilac (*Syringa persica*), and its varieties of paler purple and white, brilliantly mantle the shrubbery with colorific hues ; the Laburnum (*Cytisus laburnum*), "in streaming gold," breaks upon the charmed eye, and hangs its golden chains with profuse luxuriance. Now, indeed, is the time to enjoy the garden, while its transitory beauties last. Among these, the Snow-flake (*Leucojum æstivum*), and the deep purple Iris (*Iris germanica*), appear. *Narcissus poeticus* is still in full beauty, and the following flowers, among a host of others, may be noticed as of frequent occurrence in gardens :—*Azalea pontica*, purple Rhododendron (*R. ponticum*), Virginian spiderwort (*Tradescantia Virginica*), sweet-scented Daphne (*D. cneorum*), white Broom (*Spartium multiflorum*), the specious Peony (*Peonia corallina*), the various kinds of Stocks, and Oriental Poppies.

Chief among the ornaments of the shrubbery, the flowering thyrsi of the Lilac present an unrivalled spectacle, while their fragrance is one of the most exciting things that inspire the senses in the perfumed garden after the slumbers of the night in the vitiated chamber. Phillips, in his "*Sylva Florifera*," thus rapturously mentions the Lilac in language almost embued with the sweets of the flower itself.— "The delightful sensation which the lovely tints of this elegant flower and its fragrance produces on us in the month of May, has been compared to the first emotions of love, for nature seems to have ordained that mortals should not be permitted to see the one or feel the other with indifference ; for who can behold the flexible and modest, yet dignified clusters of

this charming flower, whose colours vary at every movement, and so sweetly descend from the finest violet down to the silvery white, without regretting the short duration of so divine a gift." Perhaps, therefore, the following lines may recal to some minds the pristine delight with which the favourite Lilac was once hailed in early days when in its acmé of splendour.

THE LILAC BOUGH.

I see it glittering by the wall,
Methinks I see it new ;
For me a stripling, much too tall,
The flowering Lilac bough.

'Twas April's reign of splendour gay,
That comes by fits and starts ;
A world of tears, and then a ray
Exulting to all hearts.

Bright beam'd the Lilac to my eye,
All brilliance and delight ;
Its purple, with the azure sky
Contrasting exquisite !

Thus standing, vainly on the gems
Making my weak essay,
A father's hand tore off the stems,
And sent me proud away.

The Lilac since for many a spring
Has blossom'd o'er my brow ;—
And still I see it clustering
As on that first bright bough.

It now brings recollection's power,
And gleams of days of yore—
All vanish'd !—and its purple flower
I ask to pluck no more.

In May many meadows exhibit a peculiar feature in the abundance of umbelliferous plants, whose rank herbage covers them. The *Chærophyllyum sylvestre*, or May Weed, is especially distinguished among these, often completely covering and whitening over whole fields, especially in the vicinity of coppices. In thick woods, a singular dull-looking flower, rising from the centre of four leaves, called Herb Paris (*P. quadri-folia*), meets the searching eye. Its green calyx and four green petals are soon succeeded by a solitary lurid purple berry, whence the name given to it by rustics of "One-berry," or, "True-love." Though not uncommon in sheltered woody spots, it so seldom meets the gaze of a non-botanical eye, as to excuse the beautiful sketch of it given by Grahame, who in his researches after birds, had probably never before seen it.

—————"There is a Hawthorn tree
With which the Ivy arms have wrestled long ;
'Tis old, yet vigorous : beneath its shade
A beauteous herb, so rare, that all the woods
For far and near around, cannot produce
Its like, shoots upright ; from the stalk
Four pointed leaves, luxuriant, smooth, diverge,
Crown'd with a berry of deep purple hue.
Upon this aged Thorn, a lovely pair
Of Cushats wont to build."*

In rocky secluded woods half unbosomed by the woodman, where the wood-ants were swarming on their crumbly pile ; or on the stone-encrusted ledge of some embowered brook, hoarsely lashing the dark

* Grahame's Birds of Scotland.

stones in its deep bed, have we oft in devious progress noticed the green sullen Paris, ere the lofty Ash had completed its leafy adornment, and while the glades of the copsy grove were still brilliant with the Bluebell, relieved at intervals by the deep red of the Cam-pion (*Lychnis dioica*), glowing in the shade like a standard. But the apple orchards are now the charm of the landscape wherever they occur. Upon the precipitous slopes of the beauteous valley of the Teme, backed by woods of ancient growth upon the Silurian hills, they perhaps appear in the highest possible perfection, and mixed up with old timbered houses, wooden spires, and numerous gardened cots, all telling of cultivation and comfort, form a truly English and inspiring picture in the noon of a bright and glowing day towards the end of May. The summer approaches its highest beauty when, as an acute naturalist has observed, "Pomona, dressed as it were in her snow-white garment, celebrates her nuptials; while the Tulip, Narcissus, and Peony adorn the garden, the fresh shoots of the Fir illuminate the woods, and the Juniper sheds its impregnating vapour."*

Gardens, enriched with Tulip-beds, are become one dazzling blaze of splendour, almost tiring to the startled gaze. The cultivators of Tulips, therefore, look over their beds, and prepare for the horticultural exhibitions, from whence their prize flowers, of "Bizarres" and "Bybloemens," with a thousand princely and imperial names, are to bear away the palm from a host of streaked competitors. The "Tulipomania" that once raged in Holland, when

* Stillingfleet's Calendar of Flora.

Tulip-bulbs passed from hand to hand at great premiums, like our present mining and railway shares, without any one wishing *permanent* possession, has been often dilated upon; yet few, besides professional florists, are aware that, even *now*, certain *rare* Bulbs bear an enormous price. Not very long ago, a London florist transmitted us a list of his roots for sale, with their prices, which for curiosity we now extract from, premising that the sums annexed are *per root*, and may be obtained, most likely, from any florist "*to order*," by any person anxious for initiation in *Tulipology*.

	£	s.	d.
Rose Brilliante	2	2	0
Ponceau Tres Blanc (Dutch) ..	2	10	0
Julianna	5	5	0
Grand Rose Imperial	10	10	0
Pompe Funebre	10	10	0
Lac (<i>true</i>)	15	15	0
Pandora	21	0	0
Shakspeare	21	0	0
Parmegiano	50	0	0
Groom's King William IV.	50	0	0

In this list £50 appears as the maximum price, but still purer gems may be had *higher*; for a tulipomaniacal friend once told us he was asked £70 for "Fanny Kemble," and that there were a few Bulbs that mounted up in the scale to £150, which I should think, as old Diogenes once said, was paying rather too dear for—*repentance*! While hunting for the Tulip list, which like every thing else, when wanted,

had got mislaid, we stumbled upon the following passage in the "*Tatler*," taken from a paper descriptive of a visit to the owner of a tulip-garden ; and it comes in so appropriately, at this moment, that we make no apology for winding up our present notice with it.

"The owner told me that he valued the bed of flowers which lay before us, and was not above twenty yards in length and two in breadth, more than he would the best hundred acres of land in England ; and added, that it would have been worth twice the money it is, if a foolish cookmaid of his had not almost ruined him, the last winter, by mistaking a handful of tulip roots for an heap of *onions*, 'and by that means (says he) made me a dish of porridge that cost me *above a thousand pounds sterling!*' He then showed me what he thought the finest of his tulips, which I found received all their value from their rarity and oddness, and put me in mind of your great fortunes, which are not always the greatest beauties.

"I have often looked upon it as a piece of happiness, that I have never fallen into any of these fantastical tastes, nor esteemed any thing the more for its being uncommon and hard to be met with. For this reason, I look upon the whole country, in spring time, as a spacious garden, and make as many visits to a spot of daisies, or a bank of violets, as a florist does to his borders or parterres. There is not a bush in blossom within a mile of me which I am not acquainted with, nor scarce a daffodil or cowslip that withers away in my neighbourhood, without my missing it. I walked home in this temper of mind, through several fields and meadows, with an unspeak-

able pleasure, not without reflecting on the bounty of Providence, which has made the most pleasing and beautiful objects, the most ordinary and most common."

Many plants of the woods and meadows remain to be noticed that adorn this month with their flowery glories. Among these, in rocky woods, is the beautiful Holly (*Ilex aquifolia*). Marshy spots, among the mountains, produce the bright yellow Globe Flower (*Trollius Europæus*), and the beautiful Water Avens (*Geum rivale*) droops her crimson petals within deep shadowy recesses, often washed by the spray of glittering waterfalls. On the margin of woods the Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*) shows its purple and white varieties, and the Milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*), often presents its deep purple flowers in the thickest woods, where, though unseen, the turtle is traced by its low coo, amidst the tangled foliage. On a brilliant sunny afternoon, a float down the sleepy, glazy stream of some river, such as "Sabrina fair," whose shallows are glittering with the silvery flowers of the Water Crowfoot (*Ranunculus fluitans*, Lam.),* is particularly delightful; while, as the dewy evening approaches, and the sun's fiery orb rests upon the horizon, the Corn-Crake, newly arrived from his migration, commences his harsh note—till, amidst the gloom of night, an incessant and reiterated *creck*-ing resounds through every field. On the tranquil bosom of the silent stream, the young May Moon trembles in transcendent lustre.

* Mr. W. A. Leighton, in his "Flora of Shropshire," very pleasingly alludes to this floating plant as constituting the "tresses fair" of Sabrina, as mentioned in Milton's *Comus*.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR MAY.

In this month the phanerogamous, or flowering plants, should almost exclusively be attended to, unless the Explorer be wandering in places of difficult access, which he is not likely to again explore, such as the wilds of Scotland, or the rocks of Cumberland and Wales. In such spots, of course, all will be fish that comes to the net. Indeed, the exploring Botanist will never shut his eyes for a moment; for it is a matter of general experience, that, although the particular plants sought for may not be met with, yet, others are sure to be found, perhaps not before previously recorded as occurring in that locality.

It is not possible to lay down a rule that shall be applicable to *all* plants; but, in general, it is best to lay the specimens out upon fresh papers immediately upon arrival at home, but without applying any weight upon them that night. In the morning they should be again changed, and the more succulent ones placed by themselves; and it is now expedient to lay on a moderate weight, which, as the plants grow drier, should be gradually increased. Till quite dry they should by no means be left for more than a day with a heavy weight upon them, or the juices will penetrate the underlying papers, spoiling both them and the plants below. The common botanical press does exceedingly well for the smaller and finer specimens, as well as for the *Graminæ*, *Filices*, &c., but is not adapted for larger or succulent-stemmed plants. I have found it best, when time pressed, or I had not the means of proceeding exactly *secundem artem* when travelling, to lay the specimens I had collected, loosely between brown or thick cap-paper,

covered at each end with a piece of card-board, and just sufficiently secured with cord. I have thus, without much injury, carried specimens for hundreds of miles. Indeed, I have often found old memorandum books that I had neglected for years, to preserve some specimens almost as fresh and good as if but recently gathered, but, in these instances, no pressure had been applied to the papers. The *colours* of flowers are difficult to be kept for any length of time, as a very little damp abstracts them. The blues, especially, are liable to fade. A very dry room should, if possible, be always selected to hold the Herbarium. From long experience I consider brown, or "bag-cap" paper, better to preserve plants in than any other.

WILD FLOWERS OF JUNE.

CHAP. XII.

EXCITEMENT TO BOTANICAL WANDERING—HABITATS OF PLANTS—THOSE OF THE BOG, WOOD, MEADOW, AND RIVER-SIDE—ROMANTIC CLIFFS OF THE WYE—PLANTS OF THE SANDY BEACH AND MARITIME ROCKS—DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPAL BRITISH FERNS—SCENE IN GLYN CLYDACH WITH THE LADY FERNS.

“How sweet it is, when mother Fancy rocks
The wayward brain, to saunter through a wood!
An old place, full of many a lovely brood;
Tall trees, green arbours, and ground flowers in flocks.”

WORDSWORTH.

One obvious charm of Botany is the continual excitement it holds forth to wander amidst the wild scenes of nature: and these wanderings are somewhat different from the saunter of the promenade, and require a little more exertion than the range of the smooth gravel beds of the garden. Woods, bogs, marshes, mountains, the precipitous crag, and the low expanse of sandy shore—all have their peculiar plants; and to find out the *habitat* of any remarkable plant is the delight of the Botanist, and affords him unmixed pleasure. When tired with his long walk in the

burning rays of noon, he sits down beside a tuft of fern, where a chrystal spring tinkles among the pebbles, his eye beams with pleasure to behold the fairy vegetation that have found a dwelling within this cool recess. The blue *Pinguicula*, or Butterwort, with its oily leaves covered with the spoils of minute flies, here enjoys the moisture of the bog ; the Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), here spreads out its rosy hairs, each tipped with a pellucid gummy drop ; and the Rose Pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*), mingles its hosts of pale pink blossoms with the grey bog-moss that spreads far around ; while occasionally, the still more delicate and beautiful *ivy-leaved* Bell-flower (*Campanula hederacea*), presents its exquisite azure petals. In still wetter spots, rising from the water, appears the Water-violet (*Hottonia palustris*), and that universal favourite, the Forget-me-not (*Myosotis palustris*). As this last plant is often mistaken by unbotanical observers, from the resemblance its flowers bear to other allied species, it may be well to remark that its leaves are *smooth*, and that it always grows in *wet* places : this may induce the poetical suggestion, that affectionate remembrance will always *moisten* the eye of sensibility, and hence no *dry* habitat can be allowed to the "Forget-me-not !" A nearly allied plant to this, which grows only in swamps or quaking bogs, was once impressed upon our recollection—for perceiving it blooming in the middle of a bog on the bleak deceptive sides of Plinlimmon, we at once made a dash at it ; but received so *cool* a reception from the coy beauty, though our knees had bent before her dripping shrine, that we retired with a very inadequate specimen of the favours

she had, at first, appeared so disposed to offer. This proved, on inspection, to be the *M. repens* of Don.

The deep wood has now its train of bright adornments that are more beauteous still within its dark recesses, than if exposed to the full glare of day. On its verge, half hidden within the overhanging foliage of the limestone steep, the beautiful Bee Orchis (*Ophrys apifera*) hangs its flowers like insects suspended in air, exserting the wondrous tube that imbibes the odoriferous nectar; amidst the thicket the Butterfly Orchis (*O. bifolia*) lifts its scented spike of greenish-white flowers, with their long horn-like lips; and in the very depth of the green wood a brown stem appears as if scorched and withered, which, on a closer view, is seen to bear pale sulphur flowers, and is the curious *Listera nidus-avis*, or Birds'-nest Orchis. Here too, in the shade, numerous plants rise up of the common green Tway-blade (*Listera ovata*), while the eye is relieved with the appearance of the bright red clusters of the Wood Hounds-Tongue (*Cynoglossum sylvaticum*). The Wood Crane's-bill (*Geranium sylvaticum*) now adorns some forest wastes with its conspicuous flowers; the elegant grass, *Melica nutans*, occurs in similar spots; and in Wyre Forest, Worcestershire, and other shady localities, whole glades are white as ermine with the magnificent stainless flowers of the narrow-leaved white Helleborine (*Epipactis ensifolia*). Abundant also in most woods, the Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea Lutetiana*) scatters its slender red spikes and pale flowers widely around. Meadows, on the borders of woods, now exhibit the beautiful pink blossoms of the St. Foin, and the clus-

tered yellow ones of the Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*); the red heads of the Clover blend into rich mingled tints with the golden yellows of the Buttercups and Birds'-foot Trefoil, while a bronzed hue prevails where the Sorrel studs the field. The scene is animated by numbers of the Green Forester Moth (*Ino Statices*), fluttering above the grass in great numbers, their wings glittering in the sun.

If we trace the river-side and the deep bed of the wintry torrent, where now a nearly exhausted rill only oozes, the ground is blue with the little *Veronica Beccabunga*, spreading in dense patches, while proudly erect, the rosy heads of the great Bistort (*Polygonum Bistorta*), are seen in lovely array; and the Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum flavum*) droops its clustered stamens over the yellow Moneywort (*Lysimachia Nummularia*), spread over the ground at its feet. Slowly we now climb the woody cliff that on either hand shadows the bright river that here, smooth as crystal, sleeps in the bright glare of noon, there hurrying o'er the shallows, musically echoes upon the ear. Let us rest in this nook, where umbrageous beeches wave their branches high in air, and the ground forms a rough glacis from the dismembered rocks that topple far above our heads, where many a golden Hawkweed glows beyond all reach or grasp. Here, in the cool interstices of the rock, the Navelwort (*Cotyledon umbilicus*) finds an appropriate home, and fills the crannies with its curious round fleshy leaves and pale campanulate flowers. Here, a host of Ferns and "Maiden-Hairs," show their beauteous *fronds*, and the climbing Fumitory (*Fumaria claviculata*) winds its tendrils around in

all directions. Here, many minute plants present themselves, more, indeed, than we shall now stop to enumerate: but the white clusters of the *Arabis hirsuta* are conspicuous, and the dizzy summit of the rock is crowned with the garland-like white and dense umbels of the Service-tree (*Pyrus torminalis*).

Many such cliffs may be found, rugged and fortress-like, on the banks of

“Sylvan Wye, that wanderer thro’ the woods;”

and in my mind’s eye, the broken masses of millstone grit on the northern flank of Symond’s Yat, forming a magnificent debacle, yet rise before my view. Frightful must the *bare* scene once have been!—but now, romantic beauty has chased desolation away, and the enormous masses of rock that spread exposed along the side of the hill, tufted with tall Beeches, and thicketed with the deep evergreen of Hollies and Yews, are invested with a charming effect, especially when the declining sun flames its slanting rays upon the scene, throwing the caverns in the rocks into gloomy shadow, while a light breeze exposes the silvery under-surfaces of the foliage of the White-beam tree (*Pyrus aria*). Lovely, too, are the hues upon those slippen rocks, half-way down the hill, that yet cling to the soil in mid air—green Bilberries, Mosses of deeper green, bristling Heath, and Lichens grey, white, and umber, combine to give them tints contrasting, yet, harmonious. Oh for another exploration of the shattered rocks of Symond’s Yat!

The scene is changed! and, full in our view, the eternal billows of the ever restless ocean lash the sandy

beach in their magnificence of foam and spray. Yet, even here is vegetable life, for, wide as the winds spread the sandy inundation from the sea margin, still Flora makes an effort for the resumption of her dominion, and disputes every inch of ground. Though reduced to a pigmy, even here the Burnet Rose blooms profusely; the Yellow Poppy (*Glaucium luteum*) shows its curious glaucous leaves and opening corolla; the Sea Milk-wort (*Glaux maritima*), the Sea-side Sandwort (*Arenaria peploides*), the Sea Convolvulus (*C. soldanella*), the Sea Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*), all display their flowers; and the *Eryngo* or Sea Holly, forms a beautiful object with its prickly blue-veined leaves, and heads of dense blue flowers.

In another quarter, the raving ocean has rolled a barrier of pebbles, and having thus raised a bar, the fresh waters from the inland hills are dammed up into marshes and morasses. These have their peculiar plants, and show the black heads of the *Schænus nigricans*, the silvery stems of the *Rhynchospora alba*, the Sea Arrow-grass (*Triglochin maritimum*), and the pretty white flowers of the Brook-weed (*Samolus valerandi*), to say nothing of a host of *Carices* and *Scirpi*, all presenting dense masses of green of various hues, diversified here and there with a single immense flossy head of Cotton-grass.

But we are now at a rocky headland towering above the ocean, whose breakers hollow its base into a hundred grottoes, caverns, and gullies, whence a hoarse murmur rises upon the ear, broken by the shrieks of gulls and other birds, nestling within their dark confines. Here, the silvery flowers of the Sea Chamo-

mile (*Anthemis maritima*), decorate the rocks; the Ladies' Finger (*Anthyllis vulneraria*), as if wounded, displays its yellow or faintly sanguine hues; the Squinancy-wort (*Asperula cynanchica*) strews its pale lilac beauties; and on a tottering crag, inaccessible in its dominion, the Tree Mallow (*Lavatera arborea*) lifts its dark villous broad-lobed leaves, and deep purple flowers, vainly tempting the eye of the too-daring Botanical Explorer. Several isolated and lofty limestone crags, on the coast of Pembrokeshire, called the Stacks, are crested with this fine maritime plant, and one in particular, called the *Elyange Stack*, is covered with it. The scenery at this point is of a sublime character—broken, precipitous rocks, a stormy sea, and vast flocks of screaming birds, combine to impress the mind with wonder and awe.

We have left the margin of stormy ocean, and are again on the mountains—gradually, we recede, till the yellow sands alone mark the line of the beach, and not a murmur ascends among the rocks even to the *listening* ear. All is hushed as by a spell; the beetle sweeps by without extracting a single modulation from the unfelt air, and the sun blazes from a sky of azure, upon which no vestige of a cloud appears. We turn the angle of a lofty grey promontory, and the sea is hidden altogether—we are now upon

“The upland ferny braes remote from man;” *

and here a tribe of plants merits our particular notice, though undistinguished by any apparent flowers. These are well-known as the *Ferns*. To a common

* Grahame.

eye the frond of a Fern presents the appearance of a leaf extremely cut and divided, or pinnated, as the common male and female Ferns, and the Brake; or with a long entire scaly-stalked green leaf, such as the Hart's-tongue, so frequently seen about the mouths of wells and other damp spots. The fructification appears, for the most part, upon the back of the *frond*, and, presenting itself all at once about Midsummer, from the unfurling or circinate veneration of the plant, was superstitiously supposed to come to perfection only on St. John's night, in each year, at the hour the Baptist was born. Hence it was supposed, that if it could be gathered at this time, it would possess many magical properties, and was even reputed to give its possessor the power to walk invisible. Shakspeare has alluded to this superstition in the often quoted passage in his Henry the Fourth. Although the reproduction of Ferns is still involved in much obscurity, it is sufficient here to observe, that these Cryptogamic vegetables spring from seeds or *spores* contained in round capsules or *thecæ*, which are collected upon the frond in linear, oblong, or circular clusters, called *sori*, which, though in some few instances naked, are in most of the species covered with a thin white integument, called an *indusium*, which being disrupted, displays the ripe *thecæ*. Each Theca opens at a transverse irregular fissure, and is furnished with a jointed spring nearly surrounding it, whose elasticity causes it to burst and disperse the spores contained within. The Ferns have been separated into three divisions, of which I shall here only notice the first—the true *Filicales*. These have their

fructification either dorsal, marginal, or in naked clusters, terminating or attached to the frond. The *Polypodiaceæ* and *Hymenophyllaceæ* have rings to their thecæ, but *Osmundaceæ* and *Ophioglossaceæ* have their thecæ without rings.

The Ferns cannot exist in a luxuriant state without moisture; they are, therefore, most numerous in humid and woody countries, or where moisture constantly drips upon shadowy rocks. They abound in the tropical islands and in equinoctial America; but in the sultry land of Egypt, where rain scarcely ever falls, only one species is known. They become rare towards the north, for Sweden can only number twenty-seven species, but nearly fifty are found in Britain. Being easily preserved and examined, they are a favourite tribe with most botanists, and deserve attentive examination, from their exquisite delicacy and beauty, in many instances.* In an economical point of view, they do not seem to be of much value; the "rheum-purging Polypody," Moon-wort, *Osmunda*, and even *Capillaire*, are, in the present day, almost discarded from practice, and, except for burning, or as litter for cattle, Ferns excite no attention in this country. Their bitter principle renders them so unpalatable to both man and animals, that they are not at all employed as food, and even insects almost universally neglect them. Let us regard them, then, in our usual way, as elegant objects of natural beauty, and as

* It has been recently discovered that Ferns will flourish luxuriantly in glass jars or boxes, provided with a little moist earth, without any other attention than that of excluding the external air. They may thus be made ornamental accompaniments of the parlour window.

incentives to botanical ramble. At this season of the year they are in full perfection in the vicinity of their native woods, bogs, and mountains.

The Adder's-tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*), is a curious little plant, with a single entire frond, about the size of a Sorrel-leaf, above which rises a narrow pointed spike of thecæ, which seems to issue from the upright leaf, like the tongue of a serpent, quivering beyond its mouth; hence the common name. The vicinity of marshes and low meadows should be examined for this plant, which, though not uncommon, and sometimes very abundant in the habitats mentioned, is often overlooked, from its being concealed among springing grass, and the heats of summer soon cause it to wither away. The Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*) is another curious Fern, whose fructification is borne upon a compound spike rising above its pinnate frond. The pinnules of the latter are in fan-shaped pairs, whence the name of Moonwort is derived. Its mystic powers gathered when the moon was "walking in her brightness," are now entirely disregarded.

Osmunda regalis is the king of British Ferns. This splendid plant bears several large bipinnate fronds, above which the deep brown *sori* rise clustered together in a compound spike of much elegance. In the bogs of Wales this Fern is very abundant, and I have often viewed it there with high pleasure. It even approaches close to the sea, as in Goodick Morass, near Fisguard, Pembrokeshire, and Cors Gochno, north of Aberystwith, in both of which localities I have gathered it. No doubt it was once a "plant of power," for Burnet states that *Osmunder* was one of

the titles of Thor, the Saxon God of Thunder, while *mund* is well known to denote strength and power. Even now "the flowering Fern" is said to possess styptic and astringent qualities.

The *Hymenophyllaceæ*, or Filmy Ferns, of which two species only are British, must be sought in wet alpine spots, among black dripping rocks, where the clouds are often resting, and continually oozing their moisture among the saturated patches of moss. I gathered the dark and sad looking *Hymenophyllum Wilsoni* in considerable plenty, a few years ago, on the rocks that overhang the romantic Rhyddol, on the opposite side of the appalling bridge of Pont Bren. In this delicate and curious genus the fruit or cups of the seed-vessels rise solitary from the axils of the fronds, on short pedicels, and consist of two valves, within which is a column covered with thecæ. They are not, however, readily observed, especially when dry, without a lens.

The *Polypodiaceæ* are all known from having their fructification in clusters at the back of the frond, which gives them so peculiar an aspect. It is these that form those masses of russet Fern, which, in the autumnal months, gives so mellow a hue to the foreground of forest scenery, and even embrowns the previously purple hills. Every heath and damp alder copse is then strewn with the crisp *Pteris aquilina*, the rigid Hard Fern (*Blechnum boreale*), or waves with the deep green fronds of the Great Shield Fern (*Aspidium dilatatum*). Even the driest walls offer a convenient nidus to the Rue-leaved Spleenwort (*Asplenium ruta muraria*), or the scaly Hart's-tongue (*Grammitis*

ceterach). A few, as the *Asplenium lanceolatum*, the singularly beautiful *Adiantum Capillus-veneris*, and the Sea Spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*), are partial to maritime situations, where they decorate the caves of ocean with a classical *nereidic* foliage. The Pembrokeshire coast is adorned with them in various spots. Others are chained to the mountain rocks, to bear all the vicissitudes of heat and cold, as the Parsley Fern (*Cryptogramma crispa*), so indicative of an alpine station, and spreading luxuriantly on the secondary slopes of Cadair Idris, Snowdon, and the mountains of Yorkshire and Cumberland. In similar habitats the Hair-ferns (*Woodsia*), and the beautiful Bladder-ferns (*Cistopteris*) are found; one of the latter, *C. fragilis*, often occurring upon the works of man in wild districts, as on the Devil's Bridge, near the falls of the Monach, Cardiganshire. The Beech-fern (*Polypodium phlegopteris*), the tender three-branched Polypody (*P. dryopteris*), as well as *P. calcareum*, also generally occur on stony mountains,* or by the margins of alpine streams just plunged from a wooded precipice into some black shadowy abyss, hemmed in by crags and ancient trees, immersed in rimy fog; silent, save to the eternal patter of the falling water; horrid with a confused debacle of ruins from the broken cliffs above; and curtained with a triple fold of Stygian shade, where darkness luxuriates even at noon-day. In the secluded tracts of Wales, many scenes may be found like the one here imaged, as at the Raven Fall in the Vale of Festiniog, and deep within the bed of the river Cyn-

* *P. calcareum* grows abundantly on the stony declivity of Cleeve-cloud Hill, one of the Cotswolds.

fael, where a naked rock towers, called *Pulpit Hugh Llwyd*, said to have been once the scene of magical rites and incantations. The Ferns, last mentioned, may be found at Cil Hepste Waterfall, and Pont Henrhyd, in the Vale of Neath, as well as most of the cataracts in North and South Wales. A scene somewhat similar to the one above depicted, is thus mentioned by Grahame, in his "Birds of Scotland."—

"What dreadful cliffs o'erhang this little stream !
 So loftily they tower, that he who looks
 Upward, to view their almost meeting summits,
 Feels sudden giddiness, and instant gasps
 The nearest fragment of the channel rocks,
 Resting his aching eye on some green branch
 That midway down shoots from the crevic'd *Crag*.
 Athwart the narrow chasm fleet flies the rack,
 Each cloud no sooner visible than gone."

It is in romantic solitudes like this that the fragrant *Maiden-hairs* delight to dwell, decorating the rocks with their slender fronds, stalked with green, as in *Asplenium viride*, or with the deepest purple, as in *A. trichomanes*. The *Asplenium filix fœmina*, or Lady-Fern, is the *Queen of Ferns*, exquisitely and supereminently delicate and beautiful. Though by no means uncommon, yet it is only in wild rocky solitudes, secluded from the glare of day, soothed by babbling water, and nursed in delicious shade, that it attains, in perfection,—that character entitling it fully to the appellation adverted to. Some years since, in a delightful exploration of Glyn Clydach, by the borders of Monmouthshire and Breconshire, I gathered some splendid specimens of this description, far superior to

the more common varieties, which, when too densely covered with sori, have rather a coarse and inelegant aspect. The Glyn is not always explorable, but at this time the water was low, and by leaping and climbing from rock to rock, over many a still pool and up many a frothy water-break, we at last gained its innermost recesses. It was a burning summer's day, and looking up the mural precipices of limestone on either side, with here and there a tuft of Yew or daring Whitebeam on a jutting crag, up to the scanty cleft of blue the opposing cliffs afforded, not a trace of cloud could be noticed upon the sky. We threaded our way on the shadowy side of the rocks, where many a fantastically boled beech lifted its tortuous arms, and wound its briarean roots among the rifted rocks. We paused before a bolder ledge that obstructed our passage, over which twin currents lazily curdled down, and from which a pair of brown Dippers (*Cinclus aquaticus*) had just emerged. Suddenly, a dark cloud curtained the deep ravine, and a peal of thunder solemnly echoed among the hills. Drops, streams, torrents of rain poured upon our heads, and we sought shelter in the first concavity we could find. But the silver threads that had just been faintly murmuring within the Glyn were now sullied in their course—they foamed and raged, lashed the rocks hoarsely in their fury, and increasing in magnitude and violence every moment, soon threatened our retreat, and the pleasant prospect presented itself of being washed away specimens and all in the arms of the furious flood, and hurled mercilessly down "the Black Cataract," which we had left behind us. Fortunately the rain abated,

and saved us from this fate ; but the adventure rises before me, in vivid hues, whenever I gaze upon the specimen I gathered here.

As almost every wild rocky lane and moist wood abounds with the *Aspidii*, or Shield Ferns, I shall leave that family for the Botanical Explorer to develop for himself, and merely now descant upon the charms of my favourite *Filix fœmina*.*

THE LADY FERN.

When in splendour and beauty all nature is crown'd,
The Fern is seen curling half hid on the ground,
But of all the green Brackens that rise in the burn,
Commend me alone to the sweet *Lady-Fern*.

Polypodium, indented, stands stiff on the rock,
With his *sori* expos'd to the tempest's rough shock ;
On the wide chilly heath *Aquilina* stands stern,
Not once to be nam'd with the sweet Lady-Fern.

Filix-mas, in a circle, lifts up his green fronds,
And the Heath-Fern delights by the bogs and the ponds ;
Through their shadowy tufts though with pleasure I turn,
The palm must still rest with the fair Lady-Fern.

By the fountain I see her just sprung into sight,
Her texture as frail as though shivering with fright,
To the water she shrinks,—I can scarcely discern
In the deep humid shadows the soft Lady-Fern.

Where the water is pouring for ever she sits,
And beside her the Ouzel and Kingfisher flits,
There, supreme in her beauty, beside the full urn,
In the shade of the rocks stands the tall Lady-Fern.

* Those who may wish to pursue the subject in detail, should consult Edward Newman's elegant "History of British Ferns."

If sweeter the *Maiden-Hair** scents to the gale,
If taller *King Osmund's*† crown'd glories prevail,
Though darker *Sea-Spleenwort*—well pleas'd I return
To the thicket that shelters the fair Lady-Fern.

Her delicate pinnæ there droop in the shade
By whispering Aspens and Wood-vetches made ;
In the pattering ravine there stands one grey Hern
Embower'd in the fronds of the tall Lady-Fern.

Noon burns up the mountain—but here by the fall
The Lady-Fern flourishes graceful and tall ;
Hours speed as thoughts rise without any concern,
And float like the spray gliding past the green Fern.

* *Asplenium trichomanes*.

† Flowering Fern (*Osmunda regalis*).

WILD FLOWERS OF JUNE

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XIII.

FLOWERY SIMILIES—THE POPPY ANNOUNCES THE APPROACH OF THE SOLSTITIAL FLORA—THE YELLOW IRIS, AND OTHER ATTENDANT FLOWERS—GRASSES—LEGENDARY AND BOTANICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ROSE—ITS SPECIES AND VARIETIES—SYMBOLS AND SENTIMENTS CONNECTED WITH THE SUBJECT.

“ I dreamt that at even a white mist arose
Where the hedge-row Brambles twist ;—
I thought that my love was a sweet wild Rose,
And I the silvery mist !

I dreamt that my love was a sweet wild Pea
All cover'd with purple bloom,
And I, methought, was an amorous bee
That lov'd the rich perfume.

Again—I was where the moon did line
The forest with silver bright ;—
I thought that my love was a wild woodbine,
And I—a zephyr light.”—ANON.

I have not the honour of knowing the poet or poetess who seized upon these flowery similies ; but to a Botanical “ Explorator,” like myself, who, of course, ought to be awake to every thing that the use of flowers, in season or out of season will, by possibility, command, at this dreamy time they come in not inappropriately. This is, indeed, making the most of

flowers—to enjoy the felicity of having them the companions of our dreams, and not only so, but to have our loves transformed into them, so that while *they* lose none of their delicacy or beauty, they are, at all events, prevented from running away from us ; while, as “amorous bees,” *we* are allowed to fly about in all directions over the gay parterre. Thanks, Mr. “Anon,” for this bright idea, which, no doubt, our dear *loves* will at once sanction with their kind approval ! It would also be a great help, occasionally, to a Botanist to become the “silvery mist,” as eminences might then be visited, where curious flowers grow, without the toil of scaling them at risk of life or limb, or some “dishonest wound” in coat or inexpressibles ! For strange to say, we have had friends who shrank to gather the Samphire or Sea-Mallow on their craggy lime-stone ledges ; and could scarcely screw up their courage to seize the ancient British Woad (*Isatis tinctoria*),* on its time-honoured red marl cliff, with its golden crown, splendid as the *torque* upon the chieftain of old ; or, if with daring step they *did* ascend the precipitous tumulus, awed by the genius of the place, they sought an easier though longer downward road ! Even Botany is not without its incidents.

* This tall plant, which has a very splendid aspect when in flower, is of rare occurrence in a wild state, but flourishes somewhat profusely on the precipitous marl cliff at the Mithe Tout, an ancient British Tumulus by the side of the Severn, above Tewkesbury. At the time alluded to in the text, when with the friend referred to, I gathered several noble specimens, 6 feet in height. Some had double stems and above twenty compound branches in each panicle of flowers. Most of these branches had more than twelve branchlets, each having about *eighty* blossoms, so that these magnificent adornments of the native Flora of Britain, each bore nearly *twenty-four thousand* single flowers !

But we must digress no further—before us, in its glory and beauty, lies the *solstitial Flora*,—the indubitable offspring of Summer, and we must “gather the roses ere they be withered.” Scarcely has the sun of June arisen, in favourable years, than a very remarkable change is perceptible in the flowers of the woods, meadows, and gardens. The *vernal Flora* is gone, or, at all events, a memento of it only remains here and there. The flaming *Poppy** is the first to announce the approach of the Summer solstice, by the display of his scarlet banner, and the Red *Lychnis* (*L. flos-cuculi*), in damp places, quickly follows, with its ragged pink petals, from whence it is commonly called “Ragged Robin.” Next the yellow specious flowers of the common Flag (*Iris Pseudacorus*), glitter in the marsh, where a host of splendid blueish-green Dragon-flies, with brown glazed wings (*Agrion virgo*), are fluttering; and conspicuous in the golden meadows, towering above the masses of sweet Honey-suckle Clover, appears the great Summer Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*.) The purplish-blue flowers of the Meadow Cranes-bill (*Geranium pratense*), are now very obvious amidst woody or river-side pastures, with several others of the same tribe; and the bright yellow heads of the Bird’s-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), often tinged with light red or crimson, greatly contribute to the ornament of the scene. A wet gully or tinkling rill, may often, at this time, be traced along the whole extent of a field by a line of the

* The light-red *Papaver argemone*, distinguished by its long hairy capsule, blows earliest; the specious *Rhæas* is rather later, as well as *P. dubium*.

Meadow Sweet

sweet-scented Meadow Dropwort (*Spiræa Ulmaria*), whose cream-coloured panicles are now becoming every where visible. The Great Valerian (*V. officinalis*) fringes woods in a similar manner. For those Botanists who study *Grasses*, this is the opportunity to inspect them in their full perfection, as their stamens and coloured farina present themselves to view. At least, thirty-five genera, and about one hundred and twenty-five species, are natives of this country. Although their want of colorific beauty renders them too often neglected, yet, surely that is made up in the elegance exhibited by their panicles, while their utility to man and animals gives them a value which no other tribe of plants can with the same justice lay claim to—for from hence is derived the “staff of life.” But even as far as beauty is concerned, the Feather-grass (*Stipa pennata*), the Silver Hair-Grass, and others of the genus *Aira*, the *Agrosti* and common Reed, the Mountain Melic-Grass (*Melica nutans*), the Hare’s-tail Grass (*Lagurus ovatus*), and the Wood-Reed (*Calamagrotis Epigejos*), are not to be despised;—while the common Quaking-Grass (*Briza media*) charms even the humblest rustics, who gather it to adorn the mantels of their little thatched cottages.

But now, at last, appears, in its multiform varieties and exuberant fragrance, the *Queen of Flowers*—

“Resplendent ROSE, the flower of flowers,
Whose breath perfumes Olympus bowers;
Whose virgin blush of chasten’d dye
Enchants so much our mortal eye.

* * * * *

Oh! there is nought in nature bright,
Where *Roses* do not shed their light!"

The very sight, or even the name of the *Rose*, is sufficient to raise our temperament to the poetical point, and recal a hundred legends and fables relative to this universal favourite, from its colour being derived from the blood of Adonis, down to the "*Rosa-mundi*,"* and Wars of the Roses, of our own history. The Rose being the emblematical flower of *England*, as the Thistle is of Scotland, the Leek of Wales, and the Trefoil or Shamrock of Ireland, it may be interesting to dilate upon it in some degree—popularly—historically, and botanically. The Rose has ever been the favourite theme of apologue—its *flowers* emblematical of the short-lived pleasures of life—its *thorns* of the ever-accompanying adversities: hence, when the late Nabob of the Carnatic addressed Lord Clive on the injuries and insults he had received from the English in India, he drew a parallel between himself and a husbandman who had suffered strangers to enter his garden, and thus, poetically summed up the melancholy detail—"The flowers of the Rose have fallen, and the stalk, with all its thorns, alone remains in my hand." In fact, we can scarcely image to ourselves a Rose *without* thorns; and Milton, to depict the superior ambrosial pleasures afforded by Eden, makes it abound with

"Flowers of all hues, and *without thorn* the Rose."

Yet, it is curious that there is actually a *thornless* species of alpine Rose, called, by Botanists, *inermis* or unarmed,

* Literally, flower of the world: hence the play of words on the inscription to fair Rosamond—" *Rosa mundi*, non *Rosa-munda*."

from this remarkable circumstance. Another fact, with regard to the Rose, is, that the five sepals of its pitcher-shaped calyx are almost invariably thus arranged—*two* are pinnate or bearded throughout, *two* are simple or unbearded, and *one* is pinnate on one side only. This gave rise to an old monkish enigma, which we thus translate —

Five brothers take their stand,
Born to the same command ;
Two darkly bearded frown,
Two without beards are known,
And *one* sustains with equal pride
His odd appendage on one side.

This may be verified by reference to a Dog-Rose in any hedge, but it hardly applies to the Chinese or Indian Roses. In the east Roses have been ever especial favourites from the earliest times ; beds of Roses are no poetical figure there ; and in Persia, according to Sir R. Ker Porter, every garden and court is crowded with its plants ; every room is fragrant with ever-replenished vases of them, while full-blown flowers strew every bath ; and in the delicious gardens of Negauristan, the eye and the smell are not only regaled by the most beautiful and fragrant Roses, but the ear is enchanted with the warblings of multitudes of Nightingales, whose notes seem to increase in melody and softness with the unfolding of their favourite flowers.

Father Catron, in his " History of the Mogul Empire," thus accounts for the origin of the celebrated Otto of Roses, now so esteemed as an indispensable appendage to a lady's boudoir. It appears that the

Princess Nourmahal, in the true style of Eastern voluptuousness, once filled an entire canal with Rose-water, upon which she made frequent sailing excursions, in company with the Great Mogul. The heat of the sun causing the disengagement of the essential oil from the rose-water, it was observed floating upon the surface, and thus was made the discovery of the essence (Otto) of Roses. Near Damascus is the famous plain of Roses, solely dedicated to the making of the Attar, which, for some miles, is thickly planted with Rose-trees, of which great care is taken. This Attar, or Otto of Roses, is the most remarkable of all the preparations from the flower, and has the consistence of butter, becoming liquid only in the very hottest weather. It is made almost in the way indicated by its accidental discovery, only that the rose-petals are put into a wooden vessel with pure water, first exposed to a powerful heat, which forces the oil to the surface, when it is gathered, and then congealed by cold : but so tedious is the manufacture of any quantity, that half a drachm of the Attar can scarcely be obtained from 100lbs of rose-petals. The scent of the minutest grain of the genuine essence is, however, very powerful.

In an odour-breathing little volume, entitled “Memoirs of the Rose,” it is observed—“The Rose, you are aware, is not only the flower of love, and the emblem of beauty, but is also considered the symbol of *secresy*. A kiss is often taken and allowed “*under the Rose*.”* A belief that two young companions

* This is all right, and forms the undisputed privilege of a “Botanical Explorer,” who, with his red Rose at Midsummer, and Mistletoe at Christmas, need never be without employment or rational amusement.

have become lovers, is a suspicion whispered—" *under the Rose.*" The certainty of arrangements for an intended marriage often transpires—" *under the Rose ;*" and whenever I greet the full-blown impression of your exquisitely engraven seal, with its appropriate motto—" *Sub-Rosa,*" I always anticipate beneath it, if not a poetical kiss or a lover's secret, yet expressions of kindness and feelings of friendship, which are sacred and inviolate." As the origin of this secrecy, " *under the Rose,*" it is said that Cupid, on some occasion, bribed Harpocrates to silence by the present of a Rose (a *golden* effigy of one it is to be presumed); and hence, at banquets it was formerly the custom to suspend a Rose over the table, as a hint that things might transpire over the convivial board not to be repeated elsewhere. The Rose was always considered a mystical emblem of the Catholic Church, probably from the mention of the "Rose of Sharon" in Scripture; and even now the ceremonial of *Blessing the Rose* is still performed at Rome. It was a very common ornament in Gothic architecture. Lands have been frequently held from a feudal superior, by the acknowledgment of a Rose at Christmas, which was not in ancient times so easily procurable as it is at present, nor, indeed, so valueless, for it appears by a MS. in the Remembrance Office, signed by King Henry the 7th, that in his reign a Red Rose actually cost two shillings—a considerable sum at that time.

Our space will only here allow a very brief botanical reference to the numerous species and varieties of Roses, more especially when the different supposed species so approximate to each other, that it is often

difficult to draw the line of distinction between them ; and Linnæus was of opinion that nature herself had, in this genus, prescribed no certain limits. The lovers of Roses may, however, consult Miss Lawrence's work, where ninety kinds are figured ; Lindley's Monograph ; the various Floras where they are enumerated ; Loudon's Arboretum ; or the splendid French work of M. Redoutè, containing descriptions of eight hundred various kinds. More than that number are now cultivated in England in the various nurseries ; and, according to M. Desportes, the French can boast no less than 2,533 named varieties. Loudon has, however, only particularly described seventy-seven kinds in his Hortus, but then many of these include multifarious varieties. The *Centifolia* group, including the Damask, Province, and French Roses, has always been most esteemed : this comprises the favourite Moss Roses, dark, white, striped, and crested. The yellow Eglantine Rose (*Rosa lutea*), makes a conspicuous show in gardens, as well as its fiery variety *subrubra*, while the Sweet-Briar is familiar to every body from the grateful scent of its leaves. The Chinese Roses (*R. Indica et semperflorens*), have been extensively cultivated in the present day, from their hardiness and long continuance in flower ; and are now to be seen in almost every garden. The *Rosa Banksiæ*, or Lady Banks's Rose, smooth, and without prickles, is a beautiful shrub, and is remarkable for its pale yellow flowers, which are small, round, and very double, on long peduncles, resembling in form those of the double Cherry, or a small *Ranunculus*, more than those of the generality of Roses. The Rose, in some form or

other, is generally diffused throughout the northern hemisphere both in the old and new world : the species are, however, less plentiful in the latter ; for while North America produces only fourteen, Europe has twenty-five. Temperate climes are most suited to numerous *kinds* of Roses, for four species only are seen wild in the south of Europe and north of Africa, but then the *individuals* are more luxuriant ; for while in the north wild Roses have always single flowers, in Italy and Greece it is not uncommon to find them with double flowers growing spontaneously in the woods and meadows. No Rose has been ever found in South America or Australia. Sir J. W. Hooker describes nineteen Roses as natives of Britain, of which, perhaps, the most beautiful are *R. spinosissima*, *R. villosa*, *R. cæsia*, *R. Sabini*, and *R. Doniana*. Some of the latter, in their prime of perfection, streaked with white and red, might well inspire a poetical mind to utter the following beautiful sentiment, which coincides with the motto with which we commenced this chapter ; and thus, insensibly, we shall glide back into the same train of thought with which we commenced.

“ O gin my love were yon red Rose,
That grows upon the castle wa’,
And I mysel a drop o’ dew
Into her bonie breast to fa’ !
Oh, there, beyond expression blest,
I’d feast on beauty a’ the night ;
Seal’d on her silk-saft faulds to rest,
’Till fley’d awa’ by Phœbus light.”

Withering has observed, that “ not less emblematic of beauty and loveliness than the Myrtle itself, the

Rose most aptly designates the tender passion, by its gradual advance from the bud to the full-blown flower ; and in its different stages was wont to be mutually presented, and, if favourably accepted, was deemed the pledge of future felicity.* It also aptly symbolizes the young virgin cut off before arriving at connubial happiness, and thus appears on the grave of maiden purity. Evelyn mentions a churchyard, in Surrey, filled with Rose-bushes.* The Rose only appears in its perfection of beauty when Summer has called forth all the glories of creation, and the leafy month of June presents its umbrageous woods sleeping in the fervid rays of noon. Hence the Rose is connected with our most delightful feelings, our earliest excursions, our long-desired holidays, our tenderest recollections ; and hence the "*Coleur de Rose*," with which I have attempted slightly to tinge this chapter, has become proverbial for that happy and exhilarating state of feeling which can see no imperfections, and trace no dark shadows within the scope of its imaginings.

" Long, long be my heart with such memories fill'd,
Like the vase in which *Roses* have once been distill'd ;
You may break, you may ruin the vase if you will,
But the *scent* of the *Roses* will hang round it still."

With this sentiment of Moore's, I pause on my flowery excursion—for I can gather no other flowers on the same day with the Rose !

* Clemence Isaure, a lady of Toulouse, who lived in the fifteenth Century, and who had often presided at the celebrated Floral Games of that ancient city, presented the citizens with magnificent markets, erected at her own cost, on condition that the games should be held in future within the hall which formed part of her donation, and that *Roses should be strewed upon her tomb*. Her statue now adorns the hall of the Academy of Floral Games in Toulouse, and is annually crowned with brilliant flowers.

WILD FLOWERS OF JUNE

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XIV.

FLOWERING OF PLANTS COINCIDENT WITH FESTIVALS
—ELDER AND SHEEP-SHEARING—SEASONAL RETAR-
DATIONS THUS NOTED—THE YEW, THE BIRCH,
AND THE HOLLY IN CHURCHES—HABITATS OF
PLANTS—INFLUENCE OF LIME-STONE—PIMPERNEL
AND OTHER METEORIC FLOWERS.

“ In every copse and sheltered dell,
 Displayed to the observant eye,
Are faithful monitors, who tell
 How pass the hours and seasons by.

The green-robed children of the Spring
 Announce the periods as they pass,
Entwine with leaves Time's feather'd wing,
 And deck with flowers his silent glass.

And thus each flower and simple bell,
 That in our pathway scattered lie,
Are Flora's monitors that tell
 How fast the winged moments fly.

Time will steal on with ceaseless pace,
 Yet lose we not the fleeting hours,
While thus their fairy steps we trace,
 As light they dance among the flowers.”

In the last chapter I presented my readers with a bed of Roses, to which I hope no objection can be made; but while we have been reposing upon it, I find

so many flowers have sprung up around us, that unless numbers are altogether neglected, it is absolutely necessary to recount more of those that belong to the delightful month of June.

I may here mention a subject not previously dilated upon—the coincidence of the flowering of certain plants with particular days or festivals. Rustic observers, men without books, having often observed particular flowers appearing almost constantly when they were engaged upon some ever-recurring employment, or on some holiday they delighted in, at length associated these flowers with the anniversaries referred to, and conceived that the times of their observation were not legitimately arrived, if the flowers were not apparent in their beauty. Thus Dyer has made sheep-shearing to correspond with the flowering of the Elder (*Sambucus nigra*).

“ If verdant *Elder* spreads
Her *silver flowers*, if humble Daisies yield
To yellow Crowfoot and luxuriant grass,
Gay shearing-time approaches.”

This, according to Forster, as marked in the ephemeris of nature, should be about the 5th of June, and in average years the Elder is often in flower by that time fully; but in the ungenial season of 1838, I observed no flowering Elder till June 23d, and even the last year, 1839, although not quite so bad, no Elder was in flower until June 14th. Poor Clare, in his “ Shepherd’s Calendar,” mentions a curious custom, as still existing at the termination of the sheep-shearing at farm houses, and probably derived from long antiquity

—when a damsel presents every shepherd, who has been employed in the work, with a bouquet of flowers—commonly called “clipping posies.” As Clare mentions several flowers that appear, in the selection, I shall quote his homely strain.

“And now, when shearing of the flocks is done,
Some ancient customs, mix’d with harmless fun,
Crown the swain’s merry toils. The timid maid,
Pleas’d to be prais’d, and yet of praise afraid,
Seeks the best flowers ; not those of woods and fields,
But such as ev’ry farmer’s garden yields—
Fine cabbage-roses, painted like her face,
The shining pansy, trimm’d with golden lace ;
The tall topp’d larkspurs, feather’d thick with flowers,
The woodbine, climbing o’er the door in bowers :
The London tufts, of many a mottled hue,
The pale pink pea, and monks-hood darkly blue ;
The white and purple gilliflowers, that stay
Ling’ring in blossom summer half away ;
The single blood-walls, of a luscious smell,
Old-fashion’d flowers, which housewives love so well ;
The columbines, stone-blue, or deep night-brown,
Their honeycomb-like blossoms hanging down,
Each cottage garden’s fond adopted child,
Though heaths still claim them, where they yet grow wild ;
With marjoram knots, sweet briar, and ribbon-grass,
And lavender, the choice of every lass,
And sprigs of lad’s-love—all familiar names,
Which every garden through the village claims.
These the maid gathers with a coy delight,
And ties them up in readiness for night ;
Then gives to every swain, ’tween love and shame,
Her ‘clipping-posies,’ as his yearly claim.”

This custom is fully developed in the beautiful scene in Shakspeare’s “Winter’s Tale,” where Perdita pre-

sents her father's guests with characteristic flowers, according to their various ages—

“ It is my father's will, I should take on me
The hostesship o' the day :—You're welcome, sir !
Give me those flowers, there, Dorcas.—Reverend sirs,
For you there's Rosemary, and Rue ; these keep
Seeming and savour, all the winter long :
Grace, and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing ! ”

It was also an ancient practice to scatter flowers upon the streams at shearing time, and this is still done in some secluded spots at the present time.

Anciently, the flowers of the woods, fields, and gardens, were intimately associated with the festivals of the church, and when the style was altered in the last century, many people who had slips in their gardens from the celebrated Holy Thorn of Glastonbury, said to flower only on the eve of our Saviour's nativity, boldly appealed to it to solve their doubts, and as the thorn, true to its usual time, could not be persuaded to accelerate its budding, Old Christmas Day was long kept in defiance of the Act of Parliament, and even now, in secluded parishes, is honoured as alone worthy of hallowed respect. The old rhyming anthology says,

“ When St. Barnaby bright smiles night and day,
Poor ragged Robin blooms in the hay ; ”

and certainly we may rest assured that Summer is not come till this plant, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, shows its ragged red petals in the grass. Another plant, still more true to the first summer days of June than the Ragged

Robin, is the Silver-weed (*Potentilla anserina*), which, distinguished by its creeping argenteous leaves and brilliant golden flowers, now burnishes the sides of roads and heathy spots. At this time, too, the Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus Crista-galli*), abounds in the grass of meadows, and when its seeds *rattle* spontaneously in their capsules, like dice in a box, the grass is then said to be ripe for cutting, and hay-harvest commences. The St. John's Wort, (*Hypericum*), bears its title from flowering on or about June 24th, the day of the celebration of the feast of John the Baptist.* Facts like these, furnish an incentive for a botanist to "look out," and by examining the appearance of well known plants, he is soon able to know whether the season is forward or backward, and even by how many days it is so.

It must be recollected, however, that no deduction of this kind can be drawn from the appearance of the *primaverai* flowers, as such plants with a warm aspect may flower in particular spots without the majority of their brethren, as every body knows who has met with a primrose or cowslip by the woodside, or on a southern bank. In mild autumns, too, it is not uncommon to find the primrose or dog-violet ante-dating its usual period of flowering by a couple of months; in these cases the first frost of course destroys the too hasty adventurers. But a reference to the solstitial flowers is decisive as to the progress vegetation has actually made. I have noticed for many years that

* In some parts of Wales this solstitial flower is placed upon door-posts as a defence against evil spirits—a custom, perhaps, derived from Druidical times.

the Yellow Iris or Flag (*Iris pseudacorus*) almost always unfolds its brilliant corolla on May 31st, or June 1st; the latter date is given by Forster in his "Rustic Calendar," and I remember but few seasons in which the marshes were not yellow with some of its flowers on the 1st of June. But in 1837 I observed no flower of the Iris expanded before June 19th, and not till June 17th in 1839, so that in those two ungenial springs there was a general seasonal retardation in the one case of *eighteen*, and in the other of *sixteen* days. The *Rosa spinosissima* usually commences flowering from the 20th to 25th of April, but in the former of the years mentioned, it did not expand, to my observation, till June 11th, while *Rosa canina* almost always showing some flowers by June 1st or 2d, presented none before June 19th, and then very partially. In 1839 the wild Rose did not show its flowers until the 20th of June, while the 20th of May, in 1840, exhibited a floral aspect at least a month in advance of the former year.

The association of the green boughs of the season, in connection with church festivals, is very pleasing, and fraught with poetical imagery. I have frequently been charmed to behold rustic churches plenteously adorned with the green pledge of renewed spring or the evergreen promise of immortality. I remember in a spring ramble, some years ago, being overtaken by a thunder-storm, when I hastened to shelter in the porch of Shrawley church,* whose adjacent wood, famed for botanical rarities, I have visited oft and again. It was the day before Whitsunday, and finding the church

* About eight miles north-west of Worcester.

*saw it in
flower June
17 1843*

door open, I walked into the edifice. The old clerk was busily engaged in decorating the interior with birchen branches just come into leaf—the “gay green birk”—sacred to joy and Whitsuntide. The old man observed that this was an ancient custom, the origin of which he did not know; but the Yew at Easter, the Birch at Whitsuntide, and the Holly at Christmas, was used to be of old time beyond memory. This is alluded to in the following quaint lines, which have reference to the four festivals of Christmas, Candlemas, Easter and Whitsuntide, which were each distinguished by their peculiar frondal ornaments.

VERSES FOR CANDLEMAS EVE.

Down with the Rosemary and Bayes ;

Down with the Mistleto ;

Instead of Holly, now upraise

The greener Box for show.

The Holly hitherto did sway,

Let Box now domineere

Until the dancing Easter Day,

Or Easter Eve appeare.

Then youthful Box which now hath grace

Your houses to renew ;

Grown old, surrender must his place,

Unto the crisped Yew.

When Yew is out then Birch comes in,

And many flowers beside ;

Both of a fresh and fragrant kinne,

To honour Whitsontide.

Green Rushes then, and sweetest Bents,

With cooler Oaken boughs,

Come in for comely ornaments,

To re-adorn the house.

It has been supposed that the sombre funereal Yew that appears in most churchyards, and often of immense size and great age, was originally planted in such situations from its use in connexion with the festivals of the church. But it is remarkable that Holly, equally wanted at Christmas, should seldom or never be found there, to say nothing of Birch; and it is most probable, that as the Cypress was the symbol of immortality with the Pagan nations of antiquity, so the Yew was selected by the Christians as equally analogous in this respect; and typical, not only of the immortality of the soul, but of the perpetual endurance of that Church against which the gates of hell were never to prevail.

By the middle of June, in dry stony localities, the little Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) often displays its scarlet fruit, which fairy-like as it appears, yields not in flavour to the largest horticultural variety. Often, indeed, when sinking wearied on the turf after a toilsome exploration, have I seen its little pitted globes with joy, and refreshed my parched tongue with its grateful and fragrant moisture.

In a former chapter I alluded to the localities of plants, and I may here add that the *habitats* some of them affect are equally curious, and form a great charm in tempting the exploring foot of botanical research. It may be said in general that some plants are found in woods, some in precipices, and others in bogs—but where are these woods, precipices, and bogs?—they must be sought and explored, for every one by no means nourishes the same plant, and some are very local, and only to be met with in peculiar spots. Not

long since I pointed out to a friend the habitat of the British Woad (*Isatis Tinctoria*), on a red marl cliff not very distant ;* but if my good friend were compelled to clamber up every cliff and hill within the kingdom of England, dominion of Wales, and town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, day by day, till another brilliant *Isatis* met his view, I fear his ascents and explorations would produce many an adventure in

“ ————— th’ imminent deadly breach,”

ere he effectually accomplished his purpose. Another friend and myself were nearly a whole day hunting among marshes and ditches a short time since for the beautiful Water Violet (*Hottonia palustris*), which we failed to find, though a thousand “*Adders’ Tongues*,”† which we had not dreamt of, presented themselves across our track—yet only two or three days after, a fair maiden brought to my house a bunch of these self same Water Violets, which my friend and myself had so long looked for in vain. And these lovely gems of intermingled lilac, white and yellow, abound in one watery ditch only in my neighbourhood, while a thousand excursions failed to present them ever to my view before. So the beautiful Wood Vetch (*Vicia sylvatica*), whose blossoms marbled with deep purple veins, might, as Sir Walter Scott says, “canopy Titania’s bower,” in some woods abounds most profusely, and, covering the bushes and trees, makes a delightful show, while in others it might be sought for in vain. Many of the

* On the precipitous face of the red marl cliff at the Milthe Tout, close to the river Severn, above Tewkesbury. The cliff terminates with a tumulus dedicated of old to the worship of Teutates.

† *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

Orchideæ are very local—the beautiful Bee-Orchis (*O. apifera*), generally only occurs on or near limestone; the Frog Orchis (*Platanthera viridis*) in moist pastures; and the singular Lizard Orchis, has been only met with near Dartford, in Kent. Those who live in the vicinity of the chalk formation may find many beautiful plants confined to such habitats, as the Military Orchis (*O. militaris*), Monkey Orchis (*O. tephrosanthos*), and the very singular Green Man Orchis (*Aceras anthropophora*), whose flowers, when closely examined, have such a strange anthropomorphous aspect, as to seem like little men or monkeys. Indeed, scarcely a range of hills or mountains exists which has not some plants either peculiar to it, or more abundant there than in other places—and in glancing at my herbarium, I have just met with a fine specimen of the purple Milk Vetch (*Astragalus hypoglottis*), which I well remember to have snatched with joy from the rugged brow of Bredon-hill, Worcester-shire, nearly ten years ago.

In general, limestone rocks, or a calcareous soil, is more favourable to the vegetation of a variety of plants than almost any other: and thus while an unobservant person might hunt a level meadow tract in vain for any botanical rarities, the experienced collector, versed in a knowledge of the habitats affected by plants, will know where he is most likely to collect a number in the smallest space. Certain localities are extraordinary in this respect. I remember rambling a few years ago, when out on a tour, from Conway to the Great Orme's Head, overlooking the Irish sea. In this distance of five or six miles, I had not met

with a single specimen of interest ; but scarcely had I commenced scrambling up the promontory, when I literally *stumbled* upon the following plants, all within a few feet of each other. *Veronica spicata*, *Briza minor*, *Salvia verbenaca*, *Scabiosa columbaria*, *Centunculus minimus*, *Gentiana amarella*, *Lychnis viscaria*, *Origanum vulgare*, *Spiræa filipendula*, *Geranium sanguineum*, *Helianthemum canum*, *Anthyllis vulneraria*, and *Solidago Cambrica*. Taking in the whole promontory, a great number of others might be enumerated.* The chalky cliffs in the vicinity of Dover, and other parts of our south-east coast, nourish a great number of species. Craig Breidden, in Montgomeryshire, is a very interesting locality, and in the vicinity of St. David's, in South Wales, several plants grow rarely met with elsewhere in Britain, as the *Cyperus longus*, and *Genista pilosa*. The practical botanist, then, should be prepared for many a long ramble if he would enjoy the pleasure of plucking the golden apples of the Hesperian gardens for himself, but even failing in the object of his quest, the many romantic scenes placed before his view, are, in themselves, a sufficient reward.

Several plants puzzle the botanist from their runagate disposition—always shifting their positions, and hence never to be found precisely in their former abodes. Such is the pretty little Deptford Pink (*Dianthus armeria*), that coyly opens only one of its speckled blossoms at a time, then closes it, and unfolds another, thus retaining her beauties as long as pos-

* *Cotoneaster vulgaris* also grows on the cliffs of the Ormshead, its only habitat in Britain.

sible, and offering a lesson of economy. The beautiful crimson Grass-Vetch (*Lathyrus nissolia*), is another wanderer, that rarely presents its crimson flowers to the charmed eye in bushy places, where it would be totally inconspicuous without such adornments, as its leaves simulate those of grass. The botanist, then, must let no ramble escape him without improvement, or he may lose opportunities never to occur again ; for it often happens that various contingencies are required for the flowering of a plant, which may not again soon occur for many years : thus, when an undergrowth of wood is cut down in a coppice or forest, that season the ground being more open to the influence of the sun, plants arise and blossom before unknown there, which, as the trees grow, sink again into profound repose—and, as in the tale of the “Sleeping Beauty of the Wood,” remain absorbed in deep slumber, till the sun, like a liberating hero, once more pierces into the broken labyrinths of their prison, and rouses them to renewed life and joy.

There are several plants that bear the name of “meteoric,” so denominated by Linnæus, as being more subjected than others to the influences of the weather and atmosphere, or, at all events, more sensitive to those influences. The pretty *Arenaria rubra*, that opens its purple petals wide before the mid-day sun, closes them instantly as soon as plucked, or folds them close should a storm obscure the welkin with dark clouds. The daisy “goes to bed,” as it is said, before the sun goes down, but the bright Yellow-wort (*Chlora perfoliata*), closes its flowers before five *p.m.*, and the yellow Goat’s-beard (*Trogopogon pratensis*),

so common now in upland meadows, even before noon—hence its colloquial name, “Go-to-bed-at-noon.”

The little Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) sullenly keeps its scarlet petals closely shut on a cloudy or a rainy day, and this so constantly and certainly, that it has been called the “Shepherd’s Weather Glass;” for whatever the barometer may indicate, if the red Pimpernel has its flowers expanded fully in the morning, there will, to a certainty, be no rain of any consequence on that day, and the umbrella and the macintosh may be safely dispensed with. The following lines were composed in illustration of this circumstance.

TO THE PINK-EYED PIMPERNEL.

“Clos’d is the pink-eyed Pimpernel.”

Dr. JENNER.

Come, tell me thou coy little flower
Converging thy petals again,
Who gave thee the magical power
Of shutting thy cup on the rain?

While many a beautiful bow’r
Is drench’d in nectareous dew,
Seal’d up is your scarlet-ting’d flow’r,
And the rain peals in vain upon you.

The cowslip and primrose can sip
The pure “mountain dew” as it flows,
But you, ere it touches your lip
Coyly raise your red petals and close.

The rose and the sweet briar drink
With pleasure the stores of the sky,
And why should your modesty shrink
From a drop in that little pink eye?

As churlishly thus you deny
 A pledge to the flow'rs of the plain,
 May I ask if your brilliant pink eye
 Frowns on others as well as the rain?
 If a drop is too much for your head,
 That thus you the nectar exclude,
 When the sun gleams the rainbow to spread,
 You must think e'en the sunbeams too rude!
 But no! 'tis not so, calm and bright
 The tempest has fled from the skies,
 The sun has illumin'd the height,
 And Miss Pimpernel opens her eyes!
 And thus 'tis in vain to o'erpower
 A maiden with flatteries and pelf,
 For true love like the Pimpernel flower
 Is best when it opens itself.

The meadows are now in their glory with towering grasses, soon destined to fall before the scythe; but ere they are cut down in their pride, several beautiful flowers are seen sparkling amidst the golden buttercups, and one characterized by its large purple corolla—the Meadow Cranes Bill (*Geranium pratense*), cannot fail to be often noticed, as well as the tall rough Cow-parsnep (*Heracleum sphondilium*), while here and there the Birds'-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), the long-rooted Cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), and several other composite flowers, form glowing patches of gold, finely contrasting with the argent masses of Daisies and *Anthemis*,* or the bright pink clusters of the Rest-harrow and Clover.

In some romantic hollow lane, overrun with Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), studded with many an old

* *Anthemis inodorus*, *A. cotula*, and other allied composite flowers.

wizard-like pollard with bare extended arms, and high overbowered with wild roses and honeysuckle, day at last closes upon our observation, and the cold perfumed breath of evening fans our forehead. The streamlet that forms a deep gulley in the bottom, has begun a patter among the pebbles that was almost unheard amidst the din and hum of day—and the bat, careering among the wytych elms high in air, is seen at recurring intervals in fine relief upon the brilliant ruby that tinges the evening sky. And now, as the road begins to appear obscure, up starts the glow-worm's "ineffectual fire" to cheer our path and stud the deepening gloom. In our next chapter we must "look out" for new adventures.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR JUNE.

As many of the beautiful tribe of *Orchidiæ* are to be found in full perfection this month, it may be useful to the Neophyte to give a hint how to preserve them in perfection. Their stems abounding in nutriment, the moisture remains a long time in them after being gathered, and thus the ovaries increase in size, and the flowers proceed slowly to wither as if still growing in the open air. Some of them, too, certainly the Bee Orchis (*Ophrys apifera*), ripen their seeds even in this artificial state, the carpels elongate, distend, burst, and finally scatter their minute and almost innumerable seeds within the sheets of paper in which they are placed. I have calculated that a single luxuriant Bee Orchis may produce more than ten thousand seeds. They probably remain a considerable time in the soil before they vegetate, but in favourable seasons this takes place very profusely, as I remember once gathering with two botanical friends, more than seventy plants within the space of a few square yards. However, from the circumstance I have mentioned, unless the vitality of the withered plants are quickly destroyed, the flowers lose all their beauty, and become entirely shrivelled up. This difficulty is to be obviated by the application of a knife and a moderately hot iron. First, an incision should be made in the ovary, and the seeds carefully extracted, even those of the unexpanded flowers. The plant is then to be placed on some soft paper, with several folds of waste paper both above and below it, and the hot iron placed on, being gently shifted as occasion requires. Great care must be taken that the iron be not *too* hot, or the specimen will be at

once totally spoiled ; but if due caution be observed, and the degree of heat properly regulated, the juices of the orchis will be speedily dried up, and the colours of the corolla beautifully preserved. In short, the result will be productive of specimens of superior appearance and value. The long-living *Sedum* tribe, and the Heaths (*Calluna et Erica*), should be immersed in boiling water soon after gathering, which will prevent their leaves dropping off. If for curiosity, any species of *Sedum* be preserved or hung up, it will continue to grow for years. A specimen of *Sedum rupestre*, I gathered in 1839, on the cliffs at Chepstow, and then carelessly left in a damp room, actually put forth flowers in December, six months afterwards.

WILD FLOWERS OF JULY.

CHAP. XV.

CHARMS OF ASSOCIATION CONSIDERED—DRUIDICAL OAK IN THE FOREST OF DEAN—PLANTS IMMIGRATING FROM ROCKS TO RUINS—A SCENE ON THE WYE—STONECROPS AND OTHER SPECIOUS PLANTS OF THE ÆSTIVAL FLORA—SOLITARY MUSINGS—THISTLES, DROPWORKS, &c.—CERRIG CENNEN CASTLE AND CHEDDER CLIFFS—PLANTS GROWING ON RUINS—ADVENTURE AT OYSTERMOUTH.

“Time, Time, his withering touch hath laid
On battlement and tow’r;
And where the banner was display’d
Now only waves a flower!”

“Of old ruinous castles ye tell,
Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find,
When the magic of Nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of her spell.”—*Campbell.*

Whether presenting a bouquet of flowers with courteous smile to his lady-love, or moralizing as he hangs over the top-most turret of some princely ruin, to pluck a sweet gem that smiles amidst the desolation there, like an iridean tinge upon a dark cloud, the Botanical Looker-Out is ever at home. The charm of association is one of the most delightful links in the concatenation of life, and they know nothing who

think the real lover of plants merely wants to arrange a flower in the "orders" of Linnæus, or domesticate it in the "families" of Jussieu or De Candolle. We all allow the raptures of the classical scholar as he fancies he treads upon the site of Troy, or paces the silent halls of the Cæsars in the "eternal city;" we admit the enthusiasm of the antiquary, who picks up a rusty spear-head, or, from some imperfect letters on an old green coin, would lead us back to the days of Carausius and the Antonines—and the mere tourist who really aims only to varnish all things with pleasure, still feels a glow or a thrill, as the great names of olden days echo upon his ear in the wild hall or dark cloister where he is leading his tittering party. Nor is the botanist without feelings when he contemplates

"Trees that have outliv'd the eagle,"

or treads within the recesses of those Silurian woods which Professor Phillips states are, "perhaps, as old as Caractacus," and within whose precincts are trees which we can prove to be older than his day. A few weeks since a Druidical oak met our view within the precincts of the forest of Dean—yes, Druidical! for its immense dark hollow bole measured in girth nearly 60 feet;* on our way to it we had passed on the brow of the *Cy Maen*† huge overthrown masses that had once been Cromlechs, and the neighbouring parish of Stanton (stone-town), pointed out the tradition. High in the midst of an oak wood, but totally

* This king of the woods stands in a field in the parish of Newland, Gloucestershire, about five miles from Monmouth.

† The Kymin Hill, near Monmouth.

concealed from a stranger, yet stands that tottering stone of judgment (the Logan-stone), beneath whose awful shadow the Druid brought the unwilling criminal—and we fancied as we passed on either side the “*broad-stones*,” where still exists a sacred well, that we formed one of the procession, till, in imagination, we saw the priest dip his hands in the pure water in the hollow bole of the stone, and descend the nine steps that still remain to the overhanging Logan, which trembled in the eyes of the judges on their stony seats as the Druid solemnly raised his hands.

The antiquary who paces round and round the entrenchment on the cloud-capt hill, seeks in vain for something to connect his mind with the people who formed it—but the botanist still sees on the green turf the same flowers that met the gaze of the wild aborigines, and they give out the same sweets to the pure morning air now, as they did when the “iron hoof of war” relentlessly tore up the soil on which their prostrate beauties reposed. Even the castles and the abbies, now abandoned and overgrown, bear but the ivy, shrubs, and plants of the neighbouring woods and rocks upon them that have advanced to a new dominion, and know not the feudal tower on whose battlements they have clambered, from the mural precipice, washed by the fierce torrent below, from which they have immigrated. Such reflections twined about us, as in the declining ruby light of evening we gathered a branch of the *Pyrus aria* from the ruined arches of Tintern, and after *feeling* the bottom of the stony Wye in its rapid wiers, where we were caught by the ebbing tide, found ourselves within

an hour of midnight engulfed as in a dark cavern, within the abyss, where the woods and rocks of Percefield on the one side, and the bare cliffs of Llancaut on the other, frown over the darkened river. None but the solitary heron, whom we disturbed in his fishing avocations, regarded us, as in silence and gloom we were vainly "looking out" at each turn for Chepstowe—and gluttonous as we are in the rambling way, it was not without pleasurable feelings that at last the grey spectre of Chepstowe Castle appeared high on its beetling cliffs, and the light on the bridge offered us the aid of its friendly beacon. We used to smile at the zeal of a geological friend, for whose researches no day was too long, and who scarcely ever tempted us out with him without being saddled with *double tolls*, from the impracticability of returning home through the gates before midnight. Alas! alas! we are getting at last almost as bad.

Morning saw us before the castle barbican, adorned with the same flowering banners as now hang upon nearly every castle in South Wales. Abundance of the bright red Valerian (*Valeriana rubra*), and the pink flowers of the great Snap-dragon (*Antirrhinum majus*), at a little distance gave to the towers a bright ruby tinge finely contrasting with the masses of yellow Lichen that had spread widely over the grey limestone rock, and time-stained its battered face. This is the month for castles, ruins, and rocks—dreary, desolate, and horrid as they often seem when the wind and the tempest roar about them, or the sheeted lightning blazes for a moment upon their crumbling fabrics—Nature, as if to solace their harsh fate, this brilliant

month smiles upon them in her most inviting manner, and lights up their abandonment with a floral illumination.

Can ought be brighter than the golden flowers of the various Stonecrops (*Sedum acre*, *glaucum*, *reflexum*, &c.), that now glare upon every precipice like so many mimic suns? relieved where the pure white *Sedum album* lifts up its argent corymbs on the stony glaxis, while on the sea shore whole rocks are beautifully silvered with the brilliant stars of the English Stonecrop (*Sedum anglicum*). Now, on the limestone cliff, whose massy bulk stretches far along like a line of mighty fortresses, the beautiful *Geranium sanguineum* presents her deep purple flowers, the perfoliate Yellowwort (*Chlora perfoliata*) opens her bright petals upon the mid-day sun, the Marjorum (*Origanum vulgare*) presents a waving line of white or light purple; masses of still brighter hue mark the habitat of the scented Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*); and the Ploughman's Spikenard (*Conyza squarosa*), with a multitude of tall yellow Hawkweeds, and the dense golden tufts of the Golden-rod (*Solidago virgaurea*), embellish the escarpments far and wide. How often at this season, with steaming brow and panting heart, have I stood midway upon the burning precipice, and forgotten care and disappointment in the flowers around me; how often, on some rustic seat, in the deep woods, has the "hum of noon" tingled in my years, as far from the haunts of men I was resting in oblivious luxury with the delicate Winter-green (*Pyrola*) in my hands, or some other plant found for the first time, and long sought in vain, while pools, visited only by the coot or

wild-duck, gleamed mistily before my eyes, and the rustle of the squirrel, high in overhanging forest trees, alone met my ears. When the great Bell-flower or Throatwort (*Campanula latifolia*), first met my admiring gaze on the red sand cliffs of Shrawley, how dashed I down its steeps to clasp the prize—and I have guided neophytic friends to bogs dotted with the flossy Cotton-grass (*Eriophorum*), whose enthusiasm would scarcely allow any but themselves to gather it. But these are dreams of botanical delight for ever past!

Contemplate we now the Æstival flora in its characteristic splendour. It is not till midsummer has fairly revealed itself, that the beautiful tribe of St. John's-worts (*Hypericum*) present themselves with their bright flowers and curiously perforated leaves; the Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), marks the same event, and now the Mallow (*Malva rotundifolia*) offers its inviting blue flowers by every road-side to unnumbered bees, while the yellow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), sparkles amidst the yet uncut grass, and the tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*) lifts up its violet clusters high on the hedge amidst masses of scented honeysuckle. It is not till the height of summer that the numerous prickly race of Thistles (*Cnicus et carduus*) lift high their bright but guarded flowers, the scented Musk Thistle (*Carduus nutans*), and the lofty Cotton Thistle (*Onopordium acanthium*), meriting especial attention amidst the group—the Meadow Plume Thistle (*Cnicus pratensis*), in wet alpine pastures, offers also a spectacle far from inelegant. In marshy spots the various species of Ragworts (*Senecio*) now begin to present a specious aspect with their

yellow disks and radiant florets, and the common and greater Knapweeds (*Centaurea*) lift their purple "hard-heads." The rosy-tinted Drop-wort (*Spiræa filipendula*), abundant on downs near the coast, and, like the "temple-haunting Martlet," always scenting the purest air, now delights the eye of the summer wanderer, and wherever a tiny rill or grass-grown spring weeps among the meadows, the Queen of the Meads (*Spiræa ulmaria*) lifts up an array of pale sulphur flowers, and fills the air with a cloud of fragrance.

That pink! ah how lovely! its sight, its scent recalls me to flowers more beautiful, that I had almost forgotten. It places me at once before that old wall at Llanbedie,* where I gathered so many of the wild Carnation (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) for my own herbarium and those of others. I was then on my way to Cerrig Cennen Castle; burning was the day and oppressive in the extreme: I stopped to rest beneath the refreshing shadow of a huge spreading oak; nor shall I soon forget the refreshing draught of butter-milk sent to my parched lips by a kind pitying Welsh-woman. "Pleasure," said a cynic of experience long ago in my hearing, "*is the hardest work done.*"—how often have I found it so; and I found it on that day when I scaled the heights of Cerrig Cennen to gather its plants, and wound midway beneath its fearful crags, where the stunted yew clasps the crumbling rock, with eagle grasp, as if fearing to fall, and brilliant golden *Cisti*, or little sun-flowers, bright blue Bell-flowers (*Campanula*), the Kidney-vetch (*Anthyllis*

* In Caermarthenshire.

vulneraria), and various beautiful Heaths (*Erica*), wreath the interstices and brow of the precipice.

Once, and once only, have I scaled the cliffs of Cheddar for the beautiful Pink (*Dianthus cæsius*) that adorns the brows of its tremendous crags. But I was too late to see it in flower. Still I was well rewarded in the sight of this pass of grandeur which I walked through, while new beauties and new sublimities called for my admiration at every step I took. Ivied rocks, battlemented turrets, tottering peaks, and impregnable buttresses, rose in stern and frowning pomp before me; nor could imagination tint a picture exceeded here by the reality. Not unaccompanied by care and anxiety, mourning for the past and prophetically looking to the future with tearful glimpse, I yet here paused upon my career. I came only, indeed, to gather a plant, and came out of my way to do so, but as I looked up to the tempest-riven crags above me, I seemed to be hurried back to days of old when, perhaps, the sea rolled upon these lofty rocks. I gazed with awe upon such sublime monuments of past revolutions, and fancied the admonition of the Great Supreme warned me to be steadfast and immoveable to the assaults of vice, as these time-worn precipices that rose land-marks of his power.

I have found the lesser Broom-Rape (*Orobanche minor*) a curious parasitical plant, with purple stem and light brown flowers, on many of the walls of the castles of Wales and Monmouthshire, which seems a curious habitat for it, since it is supposed to grow only on the roots of other plants, as the clover, &c.; and as its seeds are not winged, it seems difficult to

account for its location there.* But the subject of the migration of plants demands more attention than it has received. No sooner now is a mansion or tower abandoned, than all the plants of the neighbourhood hasten to possess it, and those that can fly (as the seeds of the syngenesian tribe) have of course the best chance—but birds carry many seeds and berries, and thus in a few years a ruined castle assumes the semblance of one of the rocks around—peopled with most of their plants—but *none different*. So numerous do these sometimes become, that Professor Sebastiani has published a “*Flora Colisea*,” containing a list of more than two hundred plants growing on the Coliseum at Rome. If we may suppose our own rocks to have been clothed in a similar manner from other pre-existing ones, it would be curious to trace, if possible, some central point from which *all* originated, unless, as contended by some botanists, there were *many* centres of creation, and thus a distinguished feature given to characterize the floras of particular parts of the earth from the earliest times. On this point I shall not, at present, dwell farther, but it is certainly interesting to the practical botanist to mark some plants that seem cosmopolites winging in every direction, while others, from some peculiarity of structure or habit, seem fixed to that locality where the first beam of light dawned on their opening foliage.

The epiphytcal plants of an old tower or ruin are frequently curious, and they serve to invest the mouldering arches with an adornment that renders them

* I gathered this plant on the top of Martin's Tower, Chepstowe Castle, in 1839.

doubly interesting to the view of the artist, the poet, and even the botanist. For, besides the beauteous ivied tracery that almost invariably robes the broken wall, the ash saplings and wild roses that are sure to dangle there, and the wallflowers that perfume even the damp dungeon now exposed to the inlet of day, I have often met with wandering plants that gave a peculiar feature to the pile where they had taken up their abode. I remember Buildwas Abbey bright with the yellow flowers of the Barberry; the majestic turrets of Pembroke are overgrown with the silver corymbs of the fragrant *Alyssum maritimum*; Newport Castle, Pembrokeshire, has all its walls bristling with the rigid spinous gorse; the ruined palace of St. David's glows with the crimson flowers of the Wall Germander (*Teucrium Chamædrys*); and, odd enough, the topmost pinnacles of the fine gothic tower of Newland church, Gloucestershire, wave with a cluster of Cherry-trees!—this I can testify from a recent botanical “look-out” there. The rare *Arabis turrita* has never been found in England except on the old walls of Trinity and St. John's colleges, Cambridge, and Magdalen college, Oxford; and the inelegant Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*) always affects ancient walls, as those of collegiate Oxford, and the rude buttresses by the old water-gate of the castle at Worcester.* *Smyrnium olusatrum*, perhaps from hav-

* Although living for many years in the immediate vicinity of this spot, the plant had escaped my notice till kindly pointed out to me by the observant eye of the Rev. Andrew Bloxsome, a gentleman well known for his acumen in the records of botanical exploration. I have since kept my eye on the *squalidus*, year after year, and it cautiously keeps so high upon the wall, that I am in hopes that even the acquisitive efforts of the Worcestershire Natural History Society will fail to eradicate it.

ing been cultivated as a pot-herb in the absence of better things, often presents itself on the mounds of ruined castles, as on those of Shrewsbury and Caermarthen, where I have observed it, and the narrow-leaved Mustard almost invariably shows itself on the fortifications of other days, as if it poetically clung to the recollections of the past. Those who have seen the walls of Southampton, Tenby, or Chester, must recollect its conspicuous aspect there. I was once detained by continued rain sometime within the ruins of Oystermouth Castle; but the time that might otherwise have been tedious, was agreeably beguiled in examining the pretty *Cochlearia danica*, which, in the most luxuriant manner, festooned the walls of the almost sole remaining perfect apartment,—that over the entrance gateway.

This incident recalls my recollection to “*the Mermaid*,” at Oystermouth. Ah! twice has “*the Mermaid*,” at Oystermouth, received me within her dripping embraces. Once I was alone—the second time with two lady companions: both times, alas! overwhelmed in a deluge of rain after mounting the heights in front of the Mumbles Lighthouse. On these rocks several of the rarer plants grow in wild profusion, as the *Asperula cynanchica*, *Junipera communis*, *Euphorbia portlandica*, *Scabiosa columbaria*, *Rubia peregrina*, the hairy-leaved variety of *Cistus Helianthemum*, *Briza minor*, *Carex pauciflora*, and the Scaly Hart’s-tongue Fern (*Grammitis Ceterach*). We had scarcely got among these plants, and were engaged in gathering them, when a mist began to spread along the surface of old ocean. It increased

to a cloud—the sea scowled, and became of a deep purple hue, while the wind swept along a rhimy shower to the heights we were patrolling. For some time we defied this, till the rhyme increasing to positive rain, we were forced to shelter within the keel of a ruined boat that served as a signal station on the crest of the range of cliffs. Here we contemplated the darkened scene and mist-covered sea with the oscillating vessels below for some time in security; but our turned-up boat was not so water tight as comfort required, and big drops beginning to distil upon us, with not the slightest prospect of any truce or armistice on the part of the rain, we made up our minds to a sally from our position, and retreat, as we best could, to “the Mermaid.” Meantime the paths had become excessively slippery—the rain made us anxious for the *nearest* cut, and, in defiling down the rocks, to effect this wished-for consummation, some of the party approached *nearer* to mother earth than was quite consistent with stainless vestures. To be short and expressive, we were all in a sad draggle-tail plight ere we could shelter from the elemental outpourings within the literally sanded cells of “the Mermaid,” where all was cold and cheerless as the chrystal mansions of the Nereids themselves. But we soon contrived to raise the cheerful flame, and drying ourselves and our garments, amused ourselves with the pictured daubs upon the walls till the frugal refreshment the Mermaid had in store for us was placed before our view. This dispatched, we had nothing to do but to gaze upon the gloomy sea, the watery skies, the inundated ground, the faded prints

upon the walls, and some old books of long bygone fashions forgotten except by antiquated "mermaids," till our Swansea vehicle drove up in the evening and rolled us over the intervening space to the spot from whence with bright expectations, now sadly dimmed, we had started in the morning. As we rode along almost close to the sea, the waves in continued loud resounding plunges burst furiously upon the beach, as if even in our flight to remind us of the insecurity attendant upon all maritime adventure.

WILD FLOWERS OF JULY

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XVI.

“FURROW-WEEDS” AND BRAMBLES—HISTORY AND ECONOMY OF THE LATTER—POPPY, CAMPION, AND OTHER CORN-FLOWERS—INDICATIONS OF THE DECLINE OF THE ÆSTIVAL FLORA—ACCOUNT OF THE NETTLE—EVENING IN A GARDEN.

“Crown’d with rank Fumiter, and Furrow-Weeds,
With Harlocks, Hemlock, Nettles, Cuckoo Flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow
In our sustaining corn.” KING LEAR.

We are not going to be quite so mad as Lear, but we must so far assume a portion of his madness as to seize upon some of the “idle weeds” placed by Shakspeare in his coronal, as well as their congeners, to indicate the rank luxuriance of nature in her wild haunts, as well as to mark that there are thorns and lurid hues even amidst Flora’s dominion, and that “the poisonous Henbane springs up amidst sweet flowers,” as sorrow, anguish, and disappointment, must of necessity furrow the fair field that youthful anticipation sees expanding before its delighted view. We have previously expatiated upon Roses—but from direful experience we know full well that the brambly thicket is not to be escaped, nor as impartial observers

could we with propriety omit to indicate its existence ; for, as Peter Pindar has shrewdly remarked in one of his serio-comico epistles—

“ In our journey through life, my dear Joan, I suppose
We shall *oft* meet a BRAMBLE, and *sometimes* a Rose !

And as to the truth of this supposition there can exist very little doubt. It must be admitted that there are too many Brambles in society ; but all that concerns us on the present occasion is to put the best face we can *botanically* upon the rude thorns and weeds that now in such profusion beset our path. Before we assume a crown of “ furrow-weeds,” it becomes necessary to “ look out ” for the brambles now abundantly flowering and spreading out their little spinous arms in every hedge ; for, without caution, undoubtedly we shall have a *detainer* lodged against us ; or, at the least, a *deodand* will be levied on the luckless garment that by any accident comes in contact with the stern and surly Hook-bearer.

“ *Ferat rubus asper amomum,*”

says Virgil—the rough bramble shall bear spices—but we have not as yet arrived at that wished-for consummation. Still it may be possible, perhaps, to mitigate the sharpness of its thorns, by considering that it has a few redeeming claims upon our attention, and though we may not be altogether inclined to submit to the diet of “ apricocks and *dewberries*” (the latter being the fruit of the creeping Bramble, *Rubus cæsius*), assigned by the Queen of the Fairies to Master Puck, yet a leaf of fine Raspberries, a raspberry and currant tart (not

forgetting the cream), or even a dish of raspberry jam is by no means unpalatable. In Sweden a rich wine is prepared from the fruit of the Dwarf Crimson Bramble (*Rubus arcticus*), which is preserved for the tables of the nobility; and in Britain the humble Blackberry is by no means unsought or unvalued by the peasantry. Even considered as a flower, the snowy corymbs of the *Rubus sub-erectus*, have a pleasing aspect in boggy spots; while in alpine localities there are species that blush with all the beauty of fairy roses. The glandular Brambles, especially, are far from inelegant, and plants are sometimes found bearing double flowers. The little Stone Bramble (*Rubus saxatilis*), which occurs in the woods of the Cotswolds and in other stony places, bears small scarlet berries which assume very irregular forms, the fruit only appearing where the species creeps upon the face of rocks exposed to the sun.

But it has been justly observed, that the Bramble-bush is a vegetable fortress to which the inhabitants of the air resort as to a fenced city;—here they build their nests in security, and rear their callow brood undisturbed within the intricate mazes of their thorny citadel, whose remarkable mode of growth, by its arching stem taking root at the extremities, soon presents an intermingled mass of thorny branches impossible to penetrate. The birds themselves often propagate their friendly protector by carrying its berries into pollards, whence in time a new briar dangles in the air, or from semi-prostrate willows into the water, producing a wild effect not unworthy of the artist's pencil. In Mazunderan, a province of Persia, on the borders of the Caspian Sea, a particular gigantic Bramble-bush

abounds, according to Mr. Frazer,* which is honoured by the inhabitants from the perfectly impervious jungles it forms, and which is considered the best defence of the country from the inroads of an invader. These Brambles bear the appellation of “Pehlewanha Mazunderanee,”—that is, the heroes or guardians of Mazunderan ; and well, says Mr. Frazer, do they deserve their title. Every peasant of Mazunderan constantly carries a bill-hook of steel to cut his way through the jungles, which even to the native would be impassable, but for this weapon to cut down the immense spinous arms of the guardian “Pehlewans” or Brambles.

Wherever the Bramble fixes its position it levies a tax on all passers—especially cattle and sheep, whose hairs and wool often give a sad ragged aspect to the hedge side, reflecting upon the slovenly farmer. Yet in the economy of nature nothing is thrown away, goldfinches, redstarts, linnets, and various families of warblers resort to this magazine of wool so providentially provided for them ; and, in the neglected “annals of the poor,” even here a last sad resource is presented, to save humble poverty from actual starvation. Clare, the Northamptonshire peasant, has thus, in his homely strains, truly but feelingly depicted the occupation of the wool-gatherer :—

“ In grief pursuing every chance to live,
That timely toils in seasons please to give ;
Through hot and cold, come weather as it will,
Striving with pain and disappointment still ;
Just keeping up expiring life’s last fire,
That pining, lingers, ready to expire,

* Frazer’s Winter Journey in Persia, Vol. II.

The winter through, near barefoot, left to pull
From bramble twigs her little mites of wool ;
A hard-earned sixpence when her mops are spun,
By many a walk and aching fingers won."

The Bramble, indeed, is peculiarly adapted for the poor man's use ; he cuts its flexile stems as binders for his thatching, and it finally binds down that mound beneath which he takes the long last sleep with his rude forefathers. So turn we from it.

We are got into the middle of July—the sun blazes in the heavens with intolerable splendour, no friendly cumuloid cloud with its fortress-like masses of vapour sails stately in the air, and not a breath of wind is stirring to fan our streaming and aching foreheads, as we pass amidst the stately glories of the cornfields, now just faintly imbibing their primary tinge, that will settle, in maturity, into that auburn hue so delightful to the eye as the pledge of plenty. There can be little doubt that Wheat had its origin in the East, but in what particular region it is now to be found in a wild state nobody can tell, and perhaps it was always solely confined to the care of man. But the "furrow-weeds"—what a splendid show *they* make among the corn, and how came they there? It is most probable that many have accompanied the corn in its progress from nation to nation, still keeping up that companionship they originally possessed. This is undoubtedly the case with the specious scarlet Poppy, which from remote ages has been associated with the worship of Ceres, and sculptured upon the statues of the goddess. The association of the Lethean Poppy with Corn seems certainly remarkable, if not unaccountable on philoso-

phical principles, whatever may have been written by the poet or moralist. It has been suggested, on the one hand, as indicating that sound and refreshing sleep which is the usual accompaniment of, and necessary restorative to, tired nature, oppressed with the toils of cultivation. On the other, it seems to exhibit the contrast of great show with little results, and unostentatious worth, ripening, almost unnoticed, into universal utility. But, botanically considered, the Poppy requires a *manured soil* for its luxuriant growth, and thus the most splendid varieties flame in the flower garden, while casual seeds scattered from these upon its confines, produce very indifferent corollæ. It thus providently follows cultivation wherever it extends, and as mitigating disease and closing the weary eye in slumber, the Poppies of sleep may deserve qualified commendation. The curious manner in which the unopened flowers droop towards the earth and rise upright in expansion, has been frequently noticed. Homer alludes to it :—

“As brilliant Poppies, overcharged with rain,
Recline their heads, and droop above the plain,
So sinks the youth.”

The Corn Marygold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*) is another brilliant corn flower, that where it prevails gives a most splendid effect to the furrowed fields from the golden breadth of its rays ; nor is the azure of the Blue-bottle (*Centaurea cyanus*), another agrarian, to be exceeded in beauty by any flower of the parterre. The bright pink of the St. Foin, the yellow racemes of the Melilot Trefoil, the purple heads of the

Lucern, the roseate hues of various Clovers, the curious tall purple flowers of the Corn Campion (*Agrostemma Githago*), overtopped by the long segments of the hairy calyx, and the innumerable red flowers of the decumbent Restharrow (*Ononis*), all now decorate the "sustaining corn" or its borders; while spots left fallow are sometimes excessively beautiful with the spotted stem and changeful blue and purple hues of the Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*), the cærulean eyes of the Alkanet (*Anchusa sempervirens*), the paler blue of the star-like Succory (*Cichorium Intybus*), the argent blossoms of the Corn Chamomile (*Anthemis arvensis*), or the less specious but remarkable inflorescence of the Hare's-Ear (*Bupleurum rotundifolium*). The Fumiter or Fumitory mentioned by Shakspeare, as occurring in Lear's coroual, is a plant common enough in gardens and cornfields, of humble growth, and purplish ringent flowers. It has been called the *smoke of the earth*, but for what reason is unknown. Another common but more characteristic appellation for it is "*Bloody-man's Thumb*." A terrible infester of the borders of cornfields and roads, which now appears lifting up its purple or white "touch-me-not" heads in all directions, tempting, however, at the same time, many brilliant butterflies and coleopterous insects to alight upon it, is what Curtis has emphatically styled the "*cursed-thistle*," and which with the rank venomous Hemlock, now arrived at its utmost luxuriance, might well have been added to Lear's bitter emblematical crown.

The Agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*), now exhibits its yellow spikes of flowers very conspicuously in pas-

tures that have been grazed, marking the commencing decline of the Æstival Flora after the finishing of the hay-harvest; while the Bindweeds (*Convolvulus arvensis et sepium*), show their purple and white bells on sunny banks and high up in the hedges in every direction, continuing far into September.

But enough for the present of docks, plantains, tares, vetches, darnel, and other "furrow weeds," though we cannot entirely omit allusion to the well-known Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*). This is one of those common and rough-looking plants generally disregarded as unworthy of notice; so that even the late Professor Martin remarks, that "such vulgar ill-humoured plants may forgive your passing them by." But however dissightly the splenetic nettle may appear, and however unpleasant the contact with it may be, it is to be remembered that upwards of fifty species of insects, including a great number of caterpillars, derive their entire sustenance from this apparently useless plant; and as these insects in their turn provide for a variety of birds, and send forth numerous brilliant butterflies to adorn the face of nature, it is absolutely necessary that the plant they feed on should be able to afford them ample protection, and surround them with a castle of defence.— "Watch the beauteous *Vanessa Atalanta* butterfly, lovely as the rose over which she flutters—see her sporting in the balmy air as if she had derived her origin from heaven, and was returning thither. But when she has to provide for her future progeny, does she deposit her eggs on the brilliant flowers where she spent her bridal?—No! she retires to the nettles, and

there safely leaves the infant embryo of a future race secure amidst the armature of the *urticæ*. Thus a host of insects are sustained by an apparently useless weed, which is itself kept within due bounds by the caterpillars that feed upon it.”* The economy of the Nettle, then, merits the closest investigation. Its stings, as they are called, are extremely curious, and there is a striking analogy between them and the fangs of poisonous serpents. In both cases the wounding instrument is hollow, and conveys the poison by a channel from the secreting gland to the wound. In the serpent, indeed, the channel does not run to the point of the fang, but opens at some distance behind it; while in the Nettle the perforation extends through the very point. A microscope of moderate power will show the stings to be highly polished and exquisitely pointed transparent setæ, furnished at their base with a kind of bulb, cellular and spongy within, in which the acrid poison is contained. Thus, when the point of the sting comes in contact with any object, its base is pressed down upon the spongy pedestal, the venom instantaneously darts up the tube, and pours its contents upon the unwary assailant. This “points a moral” not unworthy of notice. Touch the nettle ever so gently, it stings with its usual acrimony; but grasp it stoutly, and no injury is sustained. Act upon the same principle with the *nettles of life*, and all petty annoyances will lose their power of mischief. “Grapple with diffi-

* Quoted from a Lecture on the Analogies and Harmonious Associations of Plants and Animals, delivered by the Author before the Worcestershire Natural History Society; and published when he was Honorary Curator to that body in 1834.

culties," says Withering, "and thus overcome them,"—as indicated in the following lines:—

"Tender-handed, *stroke* the nettle,
And it stings you for your pains ;
Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains !
So it is with human natures,
Use them kindly, they rebel ;
But be rough as nutmeg-graters,
And the rogues obeys you well !"

Probatum est. The popular idea, however, may be thus philosophically explained. The poison is ineffective unless introduced into a wound. The extreme tenuity of the sting catches the flesh of the hand, however gently it may attempt to touch the Nettle ; but a rough unfriendly grasp disturbs its delicate mechanism, and ruptures the poison-bags;—the venom is therefore unable to flow along the orifice of the sting, and no injury is sustained. The stalks of Nettles may be employed like flax for the manufacture of a coarse kind of linen, and this is still done in some parts of Scotland; for the poet Campbell has stated that he has dined from a nettle tablecloth, and slept on nettle sheets. Even in England it is common to make nettle broth in the spring and early summer;* and the following anecdote in exemplifica-

* In Dovaston's account of Bewick, in *Loudon's Magazine of Natural History*, he describes the naturalist and engraver as collecting Nettle-tops in his handkerchief, "which, when boiled, he ate in his soup, methought with very keen relish." They are considered to purify the blood when boiled in milk.

Even Beer may be made from the young sprouts of Nettles boiled in water, adding to the liquid half a pound of sugar or treacle, with a little ginger for each gallon.

tion of this, as well as the castigatory powers of the Nettle, may interest those who may perhaps shrink from examining too closely the plant itself. The circumstance occurred sometime in 1839, at Bolton, in Lancashire. A mechanic of the town having been out for a walk, seduced by the luxuriant aspect of some very fine Nettles, had filled the capacious pockets of his fustian jacket with them, intending to surprise the eyes of his wife with so alluring a present, and treat his household with Nettle broth. In his progress homewards, however, he encountered a policeman, fresh, no doubt, from the *green* island, who, struck with the bulk of the pockets, collared the poor herbalist, and listening to no explanations, roughly dragged him into a shop, and commenced a search by diving somewhat precipitately into his pockets. He soon found there was *something there that ought not to have been there*, and finding a warmer reception than he expected, he felt the expedience of acting upon the principle of "paws off;" he, therefore, quickly withdrew his hands covered with blisters, amidst the laughter of the bystanders, and feeling *rather nettled*, hastily retired from his botanical exploration !

In Ireland, according to Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall,* the last day of April in each year is called "*Nettlemas-night*;" on this evening boys parade the streets of Cork with large bunches of Nettles, stinging their playmates, and occasionally bestowing a sly touch upon strangers who come in their way. Young and

* Ireland, by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Vol. I. p. 25.

merry maidens, too, not unfrequently avail themselves of this privilege to "sting" their lovers—and the laughter in the streets is re-echoed even in the Drawing-room!

And now, after this weedy, not to say *blistering* discussion, in the burning sun too, we may surely be allowed a turn in the garden; but it must be in the cool of the balmy evening, when the air is redolent with the fragrance of the Sweet Pea, the Honeysuckle, and the Jessamine—when the last streak of ruby alone tinges the western sky—when all the sounds of garish day are hushed to repose—when even the fluttering swift has ceased its vesper scream, while the satin-winged moths are careering about the Red Valerians and Sweet Williams in ceaseless gyrations, and the tall Evening Primrose, with its yellow wide-expanded flowers, seems to offer a pale light to the noiseless footsteps of meditation.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR JULY.

IN this month many Botanical Explorators are located upon the margin of stormy ocean, and many a fair foot paces to and fro upon the sandy or pebbly beach, inspiring with delight the invigorating breezes, or viewing the expanse of ocean with a thoughtful and melancholy gaze. To such, a slight notice of the Sea-Weed tribe, so easily preserved, and so beautiful when expanded in full beauty, may not be unacceptable. As this tribe requires separate elucidation, I have scarcely adverted to it in the monthly indications. The individuals composing it are all of a cellular nature, belonging to the Cryptogamic division *Algæ*. The *Algæ* or Flags include all those aqueous productions, whether of fresh or sea-water, which have their fructifying sporules included within their frothy, slimy, or leathery fronds, or articulated filaments, from the flaccid rootless green scum that floats upon the surface of stagnant water, to the enormous sea-tangle or *fucus*, with its woody stem, broad flapping frond, and roots whose curling fibres often surrounding fragments of shell and pebble, float majestically along upon the bosom of the flowing tide. After a storm, numbers of sea-weeds of the most brilliant colours and delicate texture often strew the stones of the shore, or may be found in neglected coves where they have been forced by the violence of the waves. To collect and preserve these is a most interesting and exciting occupation, and many a wet day may be thus profitably past in their examination, which might otherwise have moved on leaden wings, exciting only mournful and wearisome emotions. Patience is, of course, abundantly necessary in the careful laying out of the pectinated *Florina* after gathering, and finally fixing them upon their papers, and it must be borne in mind, that every specimen except the most fragile are to be carefully rinsed in fresh water posterior to their collection on the shore. After this process they, in general, preserve exceedingly well in the herbarium.

WILD FLOWERS OF AUGUST.

CHAP. XVII.

LOVE OF ADVENTURE INHERENT IN MAN—HIS EQUAL
DEVOTION TO THE LOVE OF NATURE—PLEASURES
OF BOTANICAL HUNTING, WITH AN EPISODICAL
STORM AT LAKE LYN SAVADDON—CHARACTERISTIC
WATER-PLANTS—WHITE WATER LILY, LOTOS, AND
VICTORIA REGINA—CONTRASTED ASPECT OF THE
HYDROCHARIS.

“Look on these flowers! * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * *
They are from lone wild places, forest dingles,
Fresh banks of many a low and hidden stream;
Where the sweet star of eve looks down and mingles
Faint lustre with the *water-lily's* gleam.”

MRS. HEMANS.

I remember hearing of a Phrenologist who unfolded to a very intelligent friend of mine, the momentous secret that he was fond of travelling; and, when he was informed in reply, that the fancied wanderer seldom left home, he sagely remarked that he *would do so* under other circumstances than those in which he was placed at present. But the fact really is that the love of enterprize and exploration is inherent in the breast of mankind *generally*. This it is, and not merely the abstract love of science, that has prompted men to engage in the various expeditions of survey

and discovery that have been undertaken, with a contempt of all danger. This reconciles the soldier and the sailor to the perils of their respective professions ; solaces the youths who are leaving the home of their fathers to broil beneath a tropical sun : and the very emigrant who, with panting heart and tearful eye, is watching the last indistinct vision of his native shores, yet as he progresses towards

“ Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day ;
Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling ;” *

fondly conjures up pictures of adventure and exploration, whose novelty shall help to erase the remembrance of his toils and sorrows. So it is in everyday life, from the truant school-boy seduced to a ramble in the woods from the acquisitive love of spotted and marbled eggs, to the grown-up child who, with his patent rod and morocco book of gorgeous artificial flies, sallies out to wade amidst brooks and babbling streams from morn to dewy eve—rewarded, perhaps, with a solitary *bite* or a glorious *nibble* ! But no ! if this *were* all, “ might we *not* laugh, my friend,” as Horace says ;—but is there no joy in tracing the windings of the silver stream—now placid as if stilled to devotion—now froward, wild, and turbulent, as if the passions from Pandora’s box were struggling in its liquid folds—*with* or *without* a rod and line ? Ah ! it is the love of nature that burns within our bosoms ; the instinctive admiration of those woods, dark in

* Goldsmith’s *Deserted Village*.

shadow or hallowed by the coloured iris ; those cliffs now lit up in gold, or gray in twilight ; those ravines whose depths are hidden in foliage, and into which the river plunges with sullen roar ; those landscapes with all their waters and all their inhabitants, that solemnly robed in the mists of morning, or splendidly revealed before the setting sun of evening, with all their associations, and all the thoughts and reflections they create and absorb, that charm, enchant, and enchain us. Whatever our avocations may be, whatever may be the object or the pretence with which we set out, when once under the open canopy of heaven, we are *free* ; that machinery spreads before us in its simplicity and complexity, that requires no sighs, groans, or anguish, to keep up its movements ; and that pure brisk air which the country only knows, is in motion to fan our foreheads, fill our lungs, and excite us to hope, thought, and inspiration ! The love, then, of nature in her wild aspects, is common to all minds, and penetrates, more or less, to all breasts. The rude Indian of the Mississippi feels these emotions in his hunting grounds, and they instil delight to his untutored soul ; nor does the English fox-hunter, arrayed in his scarlet uniform, who gallops twenty or thirty miles without ever seeing the fox he is pursuing, return for all that *bootless*, or without a flying glimpse of nature's changing pictures flashing upon his view—to say nothing of the *music* of the yelping hounds, the glories of a teasing fence, or the excitement of a *flop* into some cooling and meandering stream.

Now I am a *botanical* hunter, and have had my

falls, taken my *leaps*, been wet to the skin many a time, and—received the grinning felicitations of my friends! This is all right; I am myself no crying philosopher (except when in a moody temper), I am by no means afraid of a *scratch*, literally or metaphorically, seize the Rose with its thorns—*take* the enjoyment with its *responsibility*, as the Americans say; but as poets universally admit that there *are* flowers wasting their sweetness on the desert air, it seems an assigned duty to me to gather them.

But where are we? I am perambulating the eastern base of the mighty Breconian Van, or Cadair Arthur,* and yet I see it not but as in a vision, for wreathed in the cloudy folds of a tempest, its haughty brow is involved in reeking vapour, which extends even to the pebbly verge of the Usk—it seems to stalk along, a vast and awful cloudy pillar! The opposing heights of the valley are worthy of their name—the *Black Mountains*, for with their summits turbaned with rolling vapour, and their declivities black as midnight, they frown terrifically upon the misty and obscured waters of the lake Llyn-savaddon, now wrapt in slumber at their base. Thunder growls and echoes amidst the hollows of the mountains, the clouds curtain the sombre scene still more, and now as the moaning wind creaks the old oak boughs, and pauses—patters, sweeps, and tumbles the descending deluge. But a primitive Welsh cottage has sheltered me in its stony vestibule, whose hospitable entrance could not very easily exclude the “houseless stranger,” as wanting that barrier to intrusion known in English as a door;

* In Breconshire, about four miles south-east of Brecon.

and I had, therefore, a few fowls, pigs, &c., as my companions in this shelter, though there was indeed an inner *sanctum* to which I was careless to penetrate. But what a beautiful scene has succeeded to the transient tempest; the sun has burst from the obstructing barrier, the rising clouds ascend the rugged heights of Talgarth, and in hoary masses fringe his purple brow—the vapours leave the misty lake, now they shroud—now they leave Skethrog's high arching hill, now they glide over huge Dervaddon's brow, and now slowly and sulkily they retreat to head quarters about the crest of the moody Van, who demurs to their further retreat; but the lake seems now poured out in molten silver, lines of excessive brilliancy chase each other over its waters beneath the old tower of Llangorse, and pass gracefully as if in review order: the brilliant radiance spreads—scuds—flies; and now, at last, the fair lake, calm as a mirror, with one lone green islet on its bosom, shines in mild and placid beauty, while active parties of swallows are swiftly and continuously sporting over its waters.

Let us approach its margin which teems with plants, lovers of the marshes and the waters. Here in profusion rises the tall and rare Great Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*), distinguished by its *tongue-like* leaves, and whose golden flowers, elevated so high, give it an aspect different from every other kind of *ranunculus* or buttercup known to the botanist. Here, too, grows the elegant flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), whose bright pink umbels, where they abound, (as they do by Avon's immortal stream), are a greater adornment to the banks of our rivers than any other wild British

plant; beauteous though the margin of old father Thames is in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, with the floating yellow blossoms of the fringed *Menyanthes nymphæoides*. How finely do the brown shaggy heads of the Bulrush, or *Typha*, marshalled in battalions, like grenadiers with hairy caps of the olden day, contrast with the coloured beauties of the *Butomus*, the spreading patches of bright blue from one or two species of *Myosotis*, or Forget-me-not, and the expanse of glowing red that undulates upon the rippling surface of the water, where a friendly troop of *Polygoni* (*P. amphibium*), or Water Arsmart, have boldly launched out their floating leaves and pretty flowers far out upon the lake, and as boldly many a dark humble-bee is booming about them, and peeping within their roseate petals. This *Polygonum* is a curious plant, it will grow readily enough any where, and spread forth its broad lanceolate leaves profusely; but it seldom flowers unless near water; and if it can any way get down to the pool, in it goes without hesitation, and covers the waters with its terminal rosy spikes of flowers, as if it legally claimed dominion there, and would maintain its claim. But the dark brown mace-like clubs or catkins of the *Typha*, or Reed-mace, so characteristic of most of our fens, lakes, and marshes, and gracefully undulating with the breeze their shaggy heads and ribbon-like leaves, as in the narrower-leaved species, merit a closer inspection. The singular conspicuous brown catkin is, in fact, a mass of fertile flowers, which, in maturity, becomes a flossy mass of down, occasionally used for stuffing cushions; and on closely examining this down, it will be perceived,

that amongst it is a countless number of seeds, each with a distinct feathery appendage, to waft it safely over those waters where it had its origin, and wing it way, through fields of air, to settle, and in due time adorn other waters in the same ornamental manner as its parent. The barren florets are yellow, placed above the fertile ones, and in the maturity of the plant disappear. The manner in which Providence has arranged the dispersion of seeds is most remarkable, design being ever apparent that they shall not be easily destroyed after they have arrived by a long process at maturity. This is often particularly observable in plants growing in watery places. We have before noticed the "globose wig" of the Dandelion, and the Willow-herbs (*Epilobium*), present a varied structure illustrative of the same mode of dispersion. The seeds, however, are primarily concealed, and protected within long capsules, which it might be thought was sufficient for the purpose—but no! within the capsule and adjusted with the utmost elegance, each seed is seen provided with a plume so close pressed, that they present in the aggregate the moniliform aspect of the antennæ of a capricorn beetle! But no sooner do the four valves of the capsule split at the summit, than the silken plumes distend, spread out their delicate tufts like rays of light, and instead of being immersed in the waters on whose margin they grow, either float about like buoys on the surface, or are raised aloft at the impulse of the gentlest breeze.

In thus dilating upon botanical phenomena, I have, for a moment, lost sight of the beauteous lake of Llyn-savaddon. But I must again glance at it as its

waters breast its lone green islet, and bend round to shelter beneath the woody ramparts of Skethrog, at its western termination. Here scrambling down the wooded bank into the level of that below, I saw, for the first time, in its native loveliness, and almost oriental splendour, in its peerless stainless beauty, and countless argent globes, filling the air with a peculiar fragrance as they floated gracefully upon the waters—the WHITE WATER-LILY, (*Nymphæa alba*), and so vivid was the impression, so lovely did the spectacle appear, as the breeze ever and anon visiting the tangled recesses of the llyn, kept flapping the huge heart-shaped leaves of the lilies, that the following stanzas came to my aid while gazing on its waters, and their bright adornments.

TO LAKE LYN SAVADDON WITH ITS LILIES.

Silent and tranquil as a sheet of ice
Bas'd on an emerald meadow rich and fair,
As seeming bright and cold thy surface lies,
And save those solitary firs, as bare ;
For all is lonely, not a boat is there
To skim along thy waters ;—but how bright
In long extending lines they wave and glare,
Beneath Skethrog and huge Dervaddon's height—
The sulky Van still keeps his forehead out of sight.
So Lynsavaddon, on thy shores I gaz'd
In one bright interval from Llangorse tow'r ;
The landscape smil'd with beauty, the sun blaz'd
With double splendour, I enjoyed his power ;
So, lately wearied with the pealing show'r,
I stood ; delighted to enjoy the beams
Of that divine exhilarating hour ;
Up rose the Lily on the lake :—she seems
All lovely as she is, the fairy of the streams.

Up rose the Lily, the white water Lily,
 And the mild zephyr fann'd her emerald wing ;
 Along the water's undulation hilly
 She pois'd her snowy turban, murmuring,
 Half sleepy, and half loath so soon to bring
 Upon the wave her whiteness, sad she stood,
 A bridal half unwilling offering,
 Smiling and pouting in her dark green hood,
 While the broad drifting leaves upheld her lassitude.

But the sun calls, and she obeys her sire,
 And her white rays in negligence profuse
 She opens wide ;—complete in her attire,
 The orb of day with admiration views
 The white-rob'd beauty that his rays produce ;
 Around her, 'midst the leaves that flap and play,
 A *bevy of half-opening* lilies chuse
 Their various stations, clad in green and gray,—
 Her train, like orbs of gold,* glide o'er the watery way.

Bright lake ! thus beautiful with sunbeams chas'd,
 As on a darksome cloud a gleam of light :
 And with thy myriad silver lilies grac'd,
 Mimicking Ocean in his surgy might,
 When white and green his waves dance on the sight—
 I view thee as a scene in life's dull play ;
 An ornament, a moment to requite
 The tedious toils that now beset my way,
 The ills that *have* been borne, the griefs that must or may.

As the Rose is the queen of the bower, so undoubtedly is the Lily the empress of the lake, and I have only done my duty in thus testifying my admiration, as far as she is concerned ; but I have merely sketched her figure as she reclines upon her liquid throne, realizing her poetical Indian name “ Cumada,”

* The Yellow Water Lily (*Nuphar lutea*).

or " Delight of the Waters ;" but there seems something so emblematical of *purity* about this lovely plant, that the warning of Shakspeare not to paint it is singularly appropriate, and I shall not soil the fair petals of the flower by touching farther upon it. One remarkable circumstance, however, respecting the Water-lily demands attention, and that is, that its flowers expand only in bright weather and under the influence of the mid-day sun, closing towards evening, when they either recline on the surface of the water, or sink entirely under it. Hence the author of the " Moral of Flowers," has thus apostrophized this silver-crowned naiad :—

" Yes, thou art Day's own flower—for when he's fled,
Sorrowing thou droop'st beneath the wave thy head ;
And watching, weeping through the live-long night,
Look'st forth impatient for the dawning light ;
And, as it brightens into perfect day,
Dost from its inmost fold thy breast display.
Oh ! that e'en I, from earth's defilement free,
Could bare my bosom to the light like thee !"

The white Water Lily is not of common occurrence, though often abounding in the bays and inlets of pellucid Alpine lakes. I have never seen it in greater perfection than here, and filling some of the lone pools in Cromlyn Morass, near Swansea, where in the morning, during the season of its flowering, the air is loaded with its remarkable brandy-like fragrance. The yellow Water Lily (*Nuphar lutea*), though not assuming the magnificence of her sister and sovereign, yet, as I have observed above, is often in her train, and even when seen alone in retired

brooks, spreading its golden orbs upon the dimpling wave, forms by no means an unattractive object; but is really beautiful when associated with the light purple flowers of the curious Arrow-head (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*), the corymbs of the great Willow-herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), or the rich masses of purple formed by the spikes of the purple Loose-strife (*Lythrum salicaria*).

The Lotos or Water Lily of Egypt (*Nymphæa lotus*), was anciently much celebrated in the East, and was consecrated as the peculiar flower of the sun, who was styled "lord of the Lotos." The blue Lotos (*Nymphæa cærulea*), with "azure skirts and vest of gold," a native of Cashmir and Persia, has also been often sung in eastern hyperbole, as a fit couch for the repose of the gods; and in China and Japan, various beautiful species of this favourite genus are cultivated in the tanks and ponds, for their beauty and delightful fragrance. In the present day, a new and interesting member of the tribe of Water Lilies has been discovered in the river Berbice, in a part of British Guiana, South America, which the discoverer, Mr. R. Schomburgk, has named *Victoria Regina*, after our beloved Queen, and which the Botanical Society of London have adopted as their emblem. Mr. Schomburgk describes this plant as "a vegetable wonder," and says that when it first met his view, all his toils and calamities were forgotten. The flower is fragrant, consisting of many hundred petals, passing in alternate tints from pure white to rose and pink, and some of them were found to be fifteen inches across. The leaves are still more gigantic. salver shaped, almost

orbiculate, with a rim, from three to five inches high on their margin, green within, crimson without, and resting in their extension of *six feet*, on the surface of the water. The smooth water of one of the expansions of the Berbice river was covered with these beautiful Lilies, and Mr. Schomburgk remarks that he rowed from one to the other, and observed always something new to admire. Exciting as this narrative is, tempting one to throw down pen, ink, and paper, and every thing else, dashing off on the instant for Guiana, in accordance with the phrenological development hinted at in the commencement of this chapter; I would, nevertheless, recommend those who have not yet seen our beautiful *British Water Lily*, bathing her silver chalice in our alpine lakes and solitudes, to do so *first*; and then, if they please, ransack the waters of Guiana for the imperial *Victoria Regina*.

With this imperial naiad may be contrasted the humble Frog-bit Water-lily (*Hydrocharis Morsus-Ranæ*) of our own ditches and slow streams, whose leaves are scarcely larger than those of a sloe, and whose rumpled white flowers have only three petals. Yet the economy of this almost unregarded tenant of the waters is not unworthy notice, nor when closely examined is it devoid of beauty. Its floating reniform leaves are purple beneath, and it increases almost entirely by floating runners, so that small retired pools are sometimes entirely covered with the thick-set foliage, affording an impervious retreat to thousands of *lymneæ* and aquatic insects. The stainless flowers are of so delicate a structure that they are injured by contact with the water, and instead there-

fore of floating on its surface, they are providently provided with elevating stalks, around whose bases is a pellucid protecting bractea. About wild commons and shady untrodden lanes, little shield-like pools often appear, whose waters are entirely hidden, roofed over with a verdant covering of the *Hydrocharis*; and scattered about this emerald table appear the numerous white and delicate tri-petalled blossoms, as if Titania and her fairy court had there prepared a picnic banquet in the shadowy retreat. On such a picture I have gazed in the silence of a summer's evening, when (as these silvery flowers are long conspicuous in the twilight) the splendours of the broad rising moon has increased and harmonized the illusion of the scene.

WILD FLOWERS OF AUGUST,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XVIII.

PILGRIMAGE TO TY DEWI AND RAMSAY ISLAND ON THE COAST OF PEMBROKE—FOG AND PERILOUS PASSAGE ACROSS THE STRAIT—ASPECT OF AND PROSPECT FROM “THE ORGAN”—LITTORAL PLANTS—SEARCHES ON THE SAND-HILLS—BOG-PLANTS—ST. DAVID’S HEAD—STUDIES FOR A NEOPHYTE AMONG TOPPLING ROCKS—WINDY ADVENTURE AT ABERYSTWITH—SUNSET.

“I dash’d into the surge!—I pluck’d the Flowers
That on the sands in tufts are widely spread;
The *Yellow Poppy*, bright amidst the show’rs
Of spray that hover o’er her lonely bed;
The *Arenarian* sisters, green and red,
With glaucous *Spurge*, and *Sedum*’s brilliant crown,
Silvering the gloomy ramparts high o’er head;
Sea-Lavender’s blue spikes o’erspread with down,
And *Thrift*’s pink dainty tufts in rustic gardens grown.”

THE botanical adventurer (more especially if under my guidance) must be prepared for all weathers: stand the brunt of brumal or imbibe the breath of Favonian breezes—pant on the shivering mural precipice, with ready hand, to seize its rarest, though, perhaps, unnoticed gem—leap amidst the intricacies of the quivering splashy bog—or dare the solitary sandy wastes, that in wearisome extent, spread along the verge of

the ever boiling and pityless ocean. The copying of the above quotation from a neglected MS., reminds me of the terrors of a companion, who once accompanied me on a summer excursion into South Wales. I was then paying my second pilgrimage to the shrine of St. David, to reap the benefit of the ancient declaration, that *two* journies to *Ty Dewi*, the hallowed land of the Patron Saint of leek-crowned Welshmen;* should stand good in the heavenly account as equivalent to *one* to Rome; and having got this duly certified to my credit, I must needs also make a further move, by way of securing an extra *indulgence*, in visiting that island on the coast of Pembroke (Ramsay), where, it is said, ten thousand saints repose in their narrow cells! This island being more than three miles from the shore, of course some assistance was necessary to reach it; but the regular boatman being unable to go, we accepted the offer of two young men to convoy us, not being then aware that one of them had never been on the island, the other only once, and both very inexperienced in nautical affairs. But all was bright, the sea calm and flattering, the air still; and the coast of Ramsay appeared over the blue waters, as if almost within a stone's throw of us. Off! was the word, then splash went the oars; the ruined chapel of St. Justinian nodded as we receded from it, nor did we,

* The old monkish rhyme ends thus—

“*Roma semel quantum*
Dat bis *Menevia* tantum.”

Or to anglicize it in equally bad verse—

Poor Menevia (St. David's) gives at *twice*
What at Rome you get in a *trice*!

even in the ecstasy of the excitement, think of saying for a moment—"my native land good night!" I do not dislike boating, either on sea or river, but, I must confess, I rather prefer the *contemplative* part of the business; and on the present occasion, seated at my ease, calmed and soothed with the easy gliding motion of the boat, gave way to the most delicious sensations. This seemed really pleasure, and I sank into a profound reverie. A sudden exclamation roused me, and I thought we were approaching land; but neither Ramsay, Pembroke, St. David's, or any land, was at all visible—a dense fog had suddenly settled down upon the ocean, and we were completely enveloped in its folds. For a time we pushed rapidly on, till our rowers pausing, confessed, to our dismay, that they were uncertain of their position, and feared we were drifting out of our course. The fog became denser and darker, with all the sullen gloom of a November day; breakers roared as if close to our bow, and every moment we expected to strike upon some black frowning rock, or without an atom of provision, be hurried past the island towards Ireland; or forced, uncertain where to steer, to pass the coming night cradled amidst the tumbling billows. Now and then, like a dark minister of fate, an aquatic bird swept past us on rapid wing: but, alas! silent as the murdered majesty of Denmark, that Horatio vainly abjured to speak. No hope appeared, as the fog still more densely and moodily darkened around us; our young rowers pulled off their coats, and prepared for the worst; vainly did my companion lament his rashness, and call a thousand saints, only for that once, to rescue *him*--

I seemed left to my fate. Now, in despair, we raised the sail and went before the wind—then paused and suffered our idle canvass to flap, lest we should be swept off too far. It seemed an awful moment, and it really was so : for all was uncertainty. The continued fog robed the heaving waters in uniform gloom, as now they rose up with the coming tide, wildly screaming in our ears upon half sunken rocks, while still we seemed progressing into a dark and horrid vacuity, where some hideous form might in a moment stand revealed, to bar our passage ; like Virgil in his progress to the infernal regions—

“ Unseen, unheard, we took our destin’d way
Through horrid realms, waste, silent, far from day.”

At last, when hope seemed dying in the socket, our boat as suddenly emerged from the stratum of fog about us, as it had suddenly entered it, and, to our extreme joy, the cliffs of Ramsay frowned still ahead of us, though we had drifted far to the north and just escaped doubling the island among the black rocks of the Bishop and his Clerks ; who, some old quaint writer has remarked, “ preach stormy doctrine.” To run no further risk I ordered land to be made forthwith, and when I once more extended my feet on *terra firma*, I never felt more pleasing sensations, or “ kissed the consecrated earth” with such devoted fervour. Here, as a memento of my visit, I gathered the rare Fern *Asplenium Lanceolatum*, which grows in a crevice of the rocks a little south of the only house on the island, and mounted Ramsay’s most precipitous cliff, the ORGAN—rent, as if

by lightning, into clefts, peaks, and pinnacles ; stained by lichens of a thousand years' growth, in broad patches of white and orange, and bearded with dense masses of green and grey *Usneæ* and *Ramalinæ*. Fearfully low, the sea boils at the foot of the precipice ; and moans, and screams, and piercing cries, from a million of Kittiwakes, Guillemots, and Gulls, forms that mingled chorus with the dashing billows, to which the name of ORGAN, has been rather oddly applied. The proud Peregrine Falcon dashed above my head—the black sullen Cormorant flew past, to occupy the apex of an isolated rock in the surge—and, screaming in his circling flight, the pied Oyster-catcher kept still gyrating around us, among the rocks ; while the vast ocean stretched before our view, dotted with black islets, in sombre magnificence. Turning towards St. David's, its battered tower glistened in the rays of the sun, and the sound between the mainland and Ramsay, again shone as a verdant lake ; while the headlands of Pembrokeshire stretched in long succession southward, guarded by the outlying isles of Skomar and Stockam. We snatched a hasty repast at the sole house on the island, and again

“My boat is on the sea,”

amidst gigantic waving *Fuci*, oscillating with the billows, and flapping their long cold flabby fingers upon the slaty rocks. This time we fortunately crested the billows unalarmed and unscathed, and thus escaped the unhappy fate of the late Mr. Adams, F.L.S., of Pembroke, an unwearied botanist and conchologist : *

* This lamented gentleman supplied Sir James Edward Smith with many rare plants, and his name is deservedly recorded in the classic pages

who, in an adventure along this same dangerous coast, was unfortunately upset in his boat, and perished with all on board.

And now, the dangers of the sea escaped, we may contemplate at leisure the beauties that Flora scatters around, even on the extremest verge of her dominion. How inviting the gloominess of that cave, now left dry by the surges: among whose cool and hallowed recesses the Nereids might have sported, or Proteus slumbered unmolested! It is adorned with the deep green fronds and polished purple stalks of the Sea Fern (*Asplenium marinum*), whose chesnut-coloured *sori* nearly cover the alternate leaflets; the Scaly Harts-tongue (*Grammitis Ceterach*) dots the recesses of the rock with its curious foliage:—all scales on one side, and light glaucous green on the other; and amidst the rills that weep in the dampest parts of the cavern, the light and truly elegant Maiden-hair (*Adiantum Capillus Veneris*) waves its slender and elegant tresses. The precipice above, which boldly lifts its impending brow above the retiring waves, is beautifully overspread with a thousand tufts of the Thrift or Sea Pink (*Statice Armeria*), whose aggregate rosy flowers, varying in tint to purple and almost white, descend among the declivities of the rocks to the very billows; there, too, in dense masses the white

of "English Botany." According to Donovan in his "Excursions through South Wales," he had ventured too far from shore, dredging for shells; and Donovan himself relates that while out on this same unfortunate coast, a violent squall rent the cordage of their vessel, and rendered it useless. "Thus," he says, "for nearly an hour, unable to make any shore, we lay exposed to the rage of the contending elements in the open sea, expecting at every breath our little boat would upset, and plunge us into the merciless abyss of the deep."

flowers of the Sea Campion (*Silene maritima*), nod ; the crimson *Geranium sanguineum* here and there gladdens the solitary spot ; the Sea Sandwort (*Arenaria marina*), trails its long succulent stems with stars of pale purple ; and tracks of red and sparkling silver, mark the resting place of the White English Stonecrop (*Sedum Anglicum*). To the beetling rock succeeds (as is often the case on the Welsh coast) a waste of yellow sand, stretching far across the borders of the sea ; here lifted into hills and rampires, matted and bound into consistence by the fibrous roots of the Sea Lyme Grass (*Elymus arenarius*), and the Sea Reed (*Arundo arenaria*),—there depressed into huge hollows and deep ravines—smooth, soft, and delightful to the tread, where no sound but the distant murmur of the billows now enters. But these sands are not waste and devoid of vegetation as the horrid deserts of Sahara ; they glow with vegetative beauty, now developed to its utmost brightness, as if to soothe and cheer the wanderer who pants for the renovation of the enlivening sea-breeze. Here the artist might not vainly study the bright tints of nature's contrasts ; in one place islets of *Thyme*, of the richest purple, mantle over the sand—in others brilliant spots of yellow are formed by the clustering flowers of the Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), while masses of primrose tints mark the social domicile of the Sea Chickweed (*Arenaria peploides*). Within reach of the bitter spray of the tide, wherever the rolling pebbles have been chafed by the surges, the Yellow Horned Poppy (*Glaucium luteum*) quivers her specious though fugacious petals, that soon strew the shore, quickly succeeded by that

curious long curved seed vessel, nearly a foot in length, to which the colloquial appellation of *horn* has been given; close by her side the Prickly Saltwort (*Salsola Kali*) lifts its rigid foliage; the Sea Beet (*Beta maritima*) trails upon the ground; the pretty pink flowers of Sea Milkwort (*Glaux maritima*) rise half concealed; the Purple Sea Rocket (*Kakile maritima*) boldly lifts up its bright lilac corymbose clusters; and beauteous above all, the Sea Holly (*Eryngium maritimum*) exhibits bright azure heads of armed flowers, guarded by sharp spinous leaves, whose veins of the brightest blue, present the most elegant aspect imaginable.

What a maze we get into amongst the sand-hills—occasionally immured in deep though dry cauldrons, where only sand and sky are discernible, all waste and dreary as an Arabian desert—then up the ascent again, sinking knee-deep, till the summit is attained, crowned with rigid rushes, whence a long line of tumbling billows break before the eye that long gazes with pensive delight. Several rare plants may be found by the Botanical Explorer in the hollows that occur within the exterior line of sand-hills and the shore itself, such as the Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acre*), the purple Sea-Stock (*Matthiola sinuata*), from whence the beautiful garden varieties have been produced, the white scented spiral-flowered Ladies' Traces (*Neottia spiralis*), and I once gathered the yellow-flowered St. Barnaby's Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*, Linn), on the sands at Barmouth, Merionethshire.

Farther on, the sandy ridges are darkened with miniature thickets of the Burnet Rose (*Rosa spinosissima*), whose bright red fruit, now abundantly con-

spicuous, vainly tempts the eye, for its taste is insipid; amidst these pigmy bowers the glaucous Sea Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*), raises its light green umbels, singularly graceful, and its sister, the Portland Purge (*E. Portlandica*), appears with its crimson-dyed stalks; these are relieved by the minute but dense masses of yellow flowers of the Yellow Bedstraw (*Galium verum*); while the pale clusters of Cynanchy-Wort (*Asperula Cynanchica*),* the beautiful pink Dwarf Centaury (*Erythræa pulchella*), the purple and white hemlock-leaved Cranesbill, and the broad dingy purple bells of the Sea Convolvulus (*C. Soldanella*), are strewn about the sand as if dropt playfully by a bevy of sea-nymphs from their chrystal vases, ere they entered sportively the depths of the green ocean. It not unfrequently happens that where the border of the sands amalgamates with the green meadows of the interior country, that a pond of fresh water spreads its liquid mirror in tranquil beauty, strangely contrasting its unruffled surface with the angry billows that thunder in its environs. Here another race of plants appear, revealing the power of Nature to nourish new forms with the slightest change of aspect or circumstance. Amidst the shallow water sits the Long-leaved Sundew (*Drosera longifolia*); the Rose Pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*) displays her elegant bells of white or pale red; the marsh St. John's Wort (*Hypericum elodes*) glistens in the moisture as if frosted with silver, show-

* It is remarkable that both Sir J. E. Smith and Sir W. J. Hooker, in their respective Floras, affirm that the *Asperula Cynanchica* is not found in Wales, though I have myself met with it abundantly both in Pembrokeshire and Glamorganshire. It grows on the lime-stone cliffs opposite the Mumbles Lighthouse.

ing faintly her curled corolla of gold; and the fairy-like Wild Rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*), retiring as bashful beauty, blushes and shrinks amidst the humid mosses. This last, named by Linnæus from the fair Andromeda of antiquity, is a most beautiful and interesting plant, whose bright red or deep green narrow-pointed revolute leaves, glaucous beneath, and drooping roseate campanulate flowers, fix the eye of the wandering botanist upon it with rapt devotion. Like every other hidden treasure it, however, requires to be sought after, being seated on mossy tumps among rushes and mud, where the botanist will scarcely obtain his prize without a shoeful of water. In the same habitat trails the Silver Willow (*Salix Argentea*), sparkling from afar, and bushes of the Dutch Myrtle (*Myrica gale*) scattered in profusion around, fill the air with their cinnamon scent. In the wettest spots rises the princely Flowering Fern (*Osmunda regalis*), and on the surface of the water itself float the pale yellow flowers of the Water Milfoil (*Utricularia minor*), and the argent three-petalled blossoms of the Floating Water Plantain (*Alisma natans*).

In moody grandeur on the most westerly point of the mainland of Pembrokeshire, rises the trappoid crest of St. David's head. A curious outwork of greenstone tumuli range in a line between it and the more level country, like watch-towers in front of a fortress. The base of the gloomy head itself is covered with broken stones and ruined cromlechs; a stormy sea boils beneath, and amidst these deserted ruins of the past no other voice is heard but the wail of the blast and the harsh cries of flocks of choughs, who

build in the interstices of the rocks. On this dreary crag I now stood alone, while the sun went down on the misty ocean. But though man had deserted it, and the Briton and the Roman had alike disappeared from old *Menevia*, it was not untenanted by plants that had probably flourished here even before the Druidical sway. The topmost crags were yellow with the flowers of the *Genista pilosa*, in great profusion; several rare *Carices* were apparent among the bushes, and on the edge of a rivulet weeping down the declivity of the hill, I gathered *Alisma ranunculoides*, *A. repens*, *A. natans*, and the very curious creeping Pepper-grass (*Pilularia globulifera*). Here, also, the very rare *Cyperus longus* has been found. Lifting my eyes from the herbage fringing the rivulet, and gazing from the protruding rock, the lone pool of Gowrogg appeared glimmering on a wide extent of flat heath, like a phantom in the twilight. In this direction all appeared waste and denuded and deserted, only grey stones and patches of water—a perfect Ossianic scene—"a rock in the desert, on whose dark side are trickling of waters, when the slow-sailing mist has left it, and its trees are blasted with winds." And yet, on penetrating to its borders, all was *not* barren, but many a curious and beautiful flower rewarded my research.

In these sketches I have generally treated the subject playfully, as calculated to attract in a path often thought rugged and uninteresting. Yet within sight of the majestic ocean it is scarcely possible for any one to pluck a flower without feeling in some degree the kindlings of devotion within him. But on this sub-

ject a hint may suffice. A modern poet has well observed that

“The raging sea has music for all ears ;”

and, certainly, were I called upon to inculcate a devotional lesson to an ardent neophyte, I should lead him to the margin of the mighty deep ;—thence I should direct his steps to the massive headlands where the *Sea Lavender* loves to wave its azure spikes bright as the blue upon the wing of the Kingfisher—I should lead him on over shingles and pebbles, to pyramidal crumbling rocks awful as those that shadow Llyn Cae, or seem to tremble in air, all but inaccessible, about the chapel of St. Gowan’s on the coast of Pembroke.* There, as we threaded a labyrinth of rocks over narrow ridges and slippery paths still growing steeper and more abrupt, where the lone Samphire hangs over frightful abysses, the Sea Chamomile (*Anthemis maritima*) throws its silver star on the slippery edge of dismal cauldrons where the sea shrieks out of sight in chorus with the fiend-like yells of congregated sea-fowl of various species—or the Samphire leaved Flea-bane (*Inula crithmoides*) crests the crumbling rock with a crown of gold—I should still advance to some point where an arch (such as the other day met my view on the Worms-Head promontory), broken through the rampart by some freak or convulsion of Nature, admitted through its romantic portal a grand and unbounded view of the extent of ocean advancing to the shore in magnificent array, crested with snowy foam. There,

* See the Frontispiece, for a representation of the singular isolated craggy peak in the same vicinity, with the boiling ocean at its base, which is adorned with numerous tufts of the velvet-leaved Sea-Mallow.

with my disciple, I would take my seat without a word ! —But amidst our contemplations the heavens are blackened with clouds, a deluge sweeps down upon our devoted heads, the winds thunder and rave about us—the surge beats over us, the rocks topple around us before the hurricane ; we are surrounded by the tide, and the shadows of eternity spread before our trembling view !

And now a truce to terrors !—fly we from them on the wings of the first favouring sea-breeze to rest on the eternal mountains whose majestic but tempest-worn forms rise boldly on the deep purple sky, while the last gleam of sunset gives a momentary but deceptive splendour to their topmost peaks.

Such a gale as I once had to wing my papers some years ago, might perhaps serve me now ; and, therefore, as an incident connected with my botanical wanderings, I may state it. I was at Aberystwith, and having got together a host of plants from bog, mountain, shore, and morass, I was engaged at my lodgings in drying them, and as plants give out much moisture in this process, I had been changing the papers in which the plants lay. I had no small quantity of *wet sheets*, and noticing that a breeze had sprung up, I secured my papers as I thought at a corner of the window, and left them to flap in the blast while I penned my observations. Flap they did for some time securely, but at length the wind increased its fury—a thundering sound and loud exclamation suddenly roused my attention, and looking up, I perceived all my papers flying to the four winds of heaven. Vain was any effort to recall them—they

literally filled the street from end to end, and for half an hour amused the visitants of Aberystwith in chasing them about the town. It so happened that they were, for the most part, printed post folio sheets of speeches at a railway meeting at Manchester, which had fallen into my hands, and consequently excited greater attention as they fled about; while a gentleman in pursuit of some of them, which he was knocking down with his stick, was heard to say that he supposed some member of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had visited Aberystwith, though he thought he had hit upon a somewhat novel mode of *billing* the town. For my own part, when I thus saw *my* bills flying in all directions over the houses, and heard the shouts and laughter raised in the chase after them, I at once gave them up for lost, and attempted no rescue—away they dashed as if suddenly gifted with life—some went out to sea, others started in the direction of Plinlimmon and Cadair Idris, and for ought I know some may be circling in the air even now! I had thus the pleasure of unintentionally adding to the circulating medium—and had no *returned bills*.

A calm has succeeded to the angry furtive gale, the surgy billows faintly break upon the beach, and looking out upon the wide extent of the bay of Cardigan from the summit of Constitution Hill, the distant verge of ocean is irradiant with reflected glory. Long pencils of purple cloud rest like islet banks upon old ocean, and above them a broad band of ruby light stretches far into the heavens, lightening off into the pure deep azure. The sun enshrined within a crimson

haze slowly descends to his curtained pavillion, and his blood-red orb intensely brilliant sinks through the haze of crimson till bisected by the long deep purple stratus-cloud. Extending lines of topaz and ruby gleam along the sea as the sun sinks behind the cloud, and rests for a moment with his verge upon the waves—the splendid pageant is gone !

In the garden the White Lily (*Lilium candidum*) still appears the most conspicuous flower, and like a queen of beauty reigns supreme over the parterre, diffusing odours of the most delicious kind. This and other white blossoms are now observable throughout the whole night. The lofty Sunflower, and various Convolvuluses are also in full perfection at this time ; Snapdragons, Mulleins, Campanulas, Tiger-Lilies, and many others. “The force of Nature can no farther go,”—at least in this climate, and the magnificence of the flower border, with the exception of the lengthened reign of the princely family of the Dahlias, enters upon the wane at the close of the present month.

WILD FLOWERS OF AUGUST,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XIX.

ADVANTAGES OF AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH BOTANY TO
THE TRAVELLER—ITS ASPERITIES COMPARED WITH
THE ADORNED CLIFFS OF THE SEA-SHORE—NOTICE
OF THE HEATH TRIBE IN THEIR MOUNTAIN HABITATS—VARIOUS BELL-FLOWERS—RUSHES—FLOWERS
OF DECLINING SUMMER—SUNSET ON THE SKIRRID
VAWR.

"It is said that to be ignorant of a science is to be cut off from a source of enjoyment. The truth of this I was compelled, experimentally, to prove during my wanderings through these alpine provinces; for my limited acquaintance with Botany prevented me from examining and enjoying the rare and beautiful specimens which every where abound."

In my cursory reading, while "*water-logged*" at a "*WATERING-place*," within the ominous period assigned to the influence of a celebrated "*watery saint*, who has of late years contributed very largely to the stock of the tee-totallers, I have met with the above quotation. It is from a clever sketch of "*Germany and the Germans*," (1836,) by some anonymous "*Englishman*," who, amidst his various acquirements, unfortunately omitted to obtain an acquaintance with Botany; and thus frankly admits the loss of pleasure he thereby sustained. Now this is substantially the argument I have taken up to prove in these chapters

of botanical exploration, that the tourist or wanderer who *is*, in *some degree*, acquainted with botany, greatly enlarges the sources of his delight, and has an incentive to action and movement, which the mere superficial observer is entirely deprived of. Yet strange to say very few travellers know any thing of botany, and, consequently, whether in India or Persia, in Europe or America, the information they give on this subject merely amounts to the bare fact that in certain places myriads of the most beautiful flowers delighted the eye, or matchless odours from them filled the air; but, further more, their "limited acquaintance with botany," entirely forbids them to say. Now this is not only tantalizing but humiliating; it depresses curiosity, baffles exploration, and leaves imagination to draw upon error to an unlimited extent. The man who was unable (though no architect) to decide upon the order of the columns in a ruined Grecian temple, would be justly considered ignorant; and in the present day, surely, to know *nothing* of botany, argues at the very least, I should say, a defect in the organs of taste and perception.* The fair portion of human

* Unfortunately, a school of Botanists ex'ists in the present day, which under the pretence of depreciating the Linnæan system, and exalting "the Natural," leads the Neophyte into such labyrinths, that the mere *designation* of plants is scoffed at, as if the knowledge of a plant's name would act as an insuperable bar to the attainment of any further progress in botanical science. So far is this absurd idea now carried, that I have met with gentlemen who had attended regular courses of Botanical Lectures with reference to the Natural System *only*, and yet, while conversant with physiological details, knew not how they were to proceed to ascertain the name of the humblest weed that grew by the way side! Thus their want of practical knowledge rendered them almost as utterly helpless in the field as if they had never studied Botany at all. Now I contend that one of the principal sources of pleasure presented by Botany is to know not merely the natural order, but the generic and specific name of every plant that meets

kind are so sensible of this, that almost every *lady* will be now found, more or less, conversant with botany; in fact, the majority of botanists are ladies; and this circumstance should induce them to exact the cultivation of the science from their sluggish admirers.

The language that botany employs may, at first sight, appear rather repulsive; but familiarity with it soon shows this to be little more than ideal, while the new images created, and the knowledge and pleasure attained, compensates abundantly for every asperity. So on the sea shore, the indented shingles lift up their serrated ridges with forbidding aspect, and the contorted rocks, washed and wasted by the eternal boil of ocean, rise to view as sullen and barren reefs, pointed, ragged, and terrific. Yet when the tide has retired, and the quiet repose of a summer's afternoon has tempted one out to thread the rocky labyrinth, and bound from crag to crag, how different does the scene appear—how beautiful! In the recesses of the rocks a hundred or a myriad of translucent fairy pools have been left, their bosoms glistening with the quivering light that reveals the amber pebbles or pearly shells, in their transparent depths. There the crimson *Con-*

the view of the roving eye; and as this necessary knowledge is obtained with most facility by the Linnæan system, I recommend the student to direct his attention to that *primarily*. He will have, by this means, a key in his hand to the most refined and exciting of all delights; and he can *afterwards* study the Natural System, if time and leisure be at his command. A key to the knowledge of names *must be obtained*; for the architect who examined a host of buildings *without learning the names of any he saw*, would act as wisely, as the Botanist, who only attending to NATURAL ORDERS, finds himself incompetent to name, specifically, the first native plant that meets his view when Summer has wooed him to give up a leisure hour to an exploration of the hills and groves.

ferva or green *Ulva*, placidly floats; the singular *Asteria* flaps upon the cold stone; the *Fucus*, of various species, hangs its pods; and zoophytes, of numerous kinds (among which the *Sea Anemone* is conspicuous,) claim the excited attention. In other nooks, a host of *Lichens* colour the rocks with orange, mark them with sable, or stain them with bloody spots.* Some dry hollows are occupied with the succulent *Samphire*, making verdant the arid ridge; in others the golden *Inula* scatters its showy star, or the vivid purple of the scented Sea Lavender, surrounds lone hollows of emerald-tinted water, with loveliness as unappreciable as unexpected. And thus, to the cleared vision, does botany exhibit objects that before, perhaps, were unregarded: because unheeded or despised.

Let us test this in a ramble up some lofty mountain, and look out upon the plants on our right and left, as we proceed in our steepy excursion. We cannot but be gratified, let us move in what direction we will. Now it is that the different species of Heaths (*Erica*) appear in their perfection of beauty, making glad the wilderness wherever they present themselves.

* A knowledge of natural phenomena often brings to light hidden facts, and sadly encroaches upon the domain of the marvellous. The "blood-spercle" stones, at the bottom of St. Winefrid's well, at Holywell, in Flintshire, were long appealed to as miraculous relics of St. Winefrids's blood, till the prying botanist resolved them into an *algoid* production, known as *Palmella cruenta*, which has been frequently taken for blood spilt upon the ground. Thus Caxton quaintly says—

"In the welmes ofter than ones,
Ben found reed spercle stones,
In token of the blood reed
That the mayd Wenefrede
Shadd at that pytte
Whan hyr throte was kytte."

Caxt. Chron. Descript. of Walys.

Sandstone cliffs are empurpled with the flowers of the *Erica cinerea*, which often, too, covers the sides of mountains to a considerable height; while, wherever a weeping spring oozes upon the waste, the pale wax-like bells of the *Erica tetralix* droop in clusters to the ground. Sir Walter Scott has finely depicted in *Marmion*, a sun-rise in a mountainous country, when the Heath was in flower, and the first golden rays fell upon the mountains—

“And as each heathy top they kiss’d,
It gleam’d a purple amethyst.”

On the cliffs to the south of Aberystwith, on Cors Gochno, near Borth, and especially on Craig Breidden, in Montgomeryshire, as well as on the wildest parts of Bromsgrove Lickey, Worcestershire, I have enjoyed many a wade and plunge among thickets of heath, that almost buried me in their purple folds, while the murmuring and angry buzzing of a thousand bees, I had disturbed at their flowery banquet, filled the air on all sides; and I have lately returned from a ramble on the bright and lofty empurpled buttresses, that support the broken cyclopean summit of the Monmouthshire “Sugar Loaf.” But the mountain Heather of the Scotch poets, which gives such a black aspect to the bleak hills of Scotland, is the Ling, or common Heath (*Calluna vulgaris*), whose calyx, as well as corolla, is coloured: and whose elegant attire, generally diffused, as it is in Europe, deserves every encomium it has received. When in full flower, nothing can exceed the beauty presented by a near prospect of hills of blooming heather, while they offer to the way-worn wanderer a fragrant couch, on which

he may recline in luscious idleness, and obtain "divine oblivion of low-thoughted care." Burns has presented, in his own matchless way, the picture of a "bonnie moor-hen" flying from her pursuers, among the blooming heather, where—

"Sweet brushing the dew from the brown heather bells,
Her colour betrayed her on yon mossy fells;
Auld Phœbus himsel, as he peep'd o'er the hill,
In spite at her plumage he tried his skill;
He levell'd his rays where she bask'd on the brae—
His rays were *outshone*, and but mark'd where she lay."

From the extent of moorland in Scotland, that country has been generally distinguished as the "land of brown heath," and the clans of McDonald and McAlister bear two of the species as their device: hence clouds, storms, and impending dreary rocks, are images that unconsciously arise in our minds, when referring to the heather bells; and a modern writer, when descanting upon the "moral of flowers," has exclaimed—

"Since I've view'd thee afar in thine own Highland dwelling,
There are spells clinging round thee I knew not before;
For to fancy's rapt ear dost thou ever seem telling
Of the pine-crested rock and the cataract's roar."

It is remarkable that the family of Heaths are confined entirely to the old world, and while but few species occur in the north, more than three hundred occur in the country about the Cape of Good Hope. These are splendid ornaments in green-houses, for they exhibit a surprising diversity in their flowers: where all the hues of red, pink, purple, green, and the purest pearly whites, tinge corollas swelled like a

flask, narrow as a tube, diluted like a vase, or round as an air-bubble; and these again are hairy, silky, shaggy, glutinous, or polished with a finish superior to the finest glass or porcelain. Yet it is asserted that this favourite tribe of plants is by no means so handsome in its native country as when cultivated, as they there form scraggy shrubby bushes, to which the colonist boors have not even vouchsafed a name. While, however, the Cape alone furnishes those delicate or showy heaths, so ornamental to the greenhouse, it is principally in the northern parts of Britain that any of the species are employed for economical purposes. There, ale is frequently made by brewing one part malt and two parts of the young tops of heath; the flowers furnish an abundant store of honey to the bees; besoms are made of its branches, faggots of its old stems, it is used to thatch houses, and forms a fragrant couch, that even poets have celebrated—

————— “The stranger’s bed
Was there of *Mountain Heather* spread.”

Its general use in the Highlands for beds, has suggested the following remark from the editor of the last edition of *Withering*, which, as a contribution to imaginative botany, may deserve consideration. “If it be true, as there is reason to believe, that the ancients were wont to repose on the leaves of particular trees, not doubting their powers of inspiration: as *Agnus-Castus* to compose the troubled mind, the *Laurel* to excite poetic fire, or the *Bay* to awaken visions of glory, why may not the *Heather-couch* not merely refresh the wearied limbs of the rough sons of

freedom, but inspire the noblest sentiments into minds scarcely less imaginative, and nothing lacking in credulity?"

From the Heather the transition is easy to the "Heathbell of Cheviot," the "Harebell" of Scotland, the "Bell-flower" of England, and the *Campanula*, of the botanist. This is a very beautiful and favourite genus, now everywhere exhibiting its trembling azure bells in exquisite perfection, but especially in hilly spots, on the sides of deep shady sandstone lanes, and other similar localities. The Canterbury Bells (*Campanula trachelium*), are rather plentiful on the margins of woods, and the Giant Throat-wort (*C. latifolia*) is very ornamental on the copsy banks of the rivers where it abounds—as the Severn and the Wye, and often opens its hairy throat in the bosky dells of the north. The most abundant species is the round-leaved Bell-flower (*C. rotundifolia*) often waving its delicate flowers on huge shattered masses of rock, or decking the tottering turret that has escaped the invasion of the hundred-handed Ivy. Hence this species is a favourite with poets: and Scott has described the "elastic tread" of his "Lady of the Lake," as not even disturbing the position of the reclining Harebell. The spreading Bell-flower (*C. patula*) is another beautiful kind, generally adorning woods, or their borders, in sandstone districts; while the clustered Bell-flower (*C. glomerata*), affects calcareous hills, such as the Cotswolds, where it occurs in extreme profusion. But the Ivy-leaved Bell flower (*C. Hederaea*), is, undoubtedly, the most exquisitely delicate of all. This fairy gem is mostly confined to mountain

bogs, whose surface it besprinkles with the most lovely azure; and hence the sight of it recalls a host of past rambles in secluded spots of Alpine beauty: it is, indeed, a true mountaineer, loving the splashy mossy spring, that feeds the bubbling tenant of the dark ravine below, where the brown Dipper (*Cinclus aquaticus*), is rejoicing in the pellucid stream, or the Ring-Ouzel runs hiding its snowy circlet as it treads the labyrinth of the stiff bilberry bushes. I have gathered this fairy bell amidst the dark turbaries of Plinlimmon, by Llyn Teivy and its sister lakes that fill the craters and hollows of the mountain above Strata Florida Abbey, Cardiganshire; on the fort-like hills that barrier the course of the infant Severn about Llanidloes; and in the summer of 1839, most profusely, as I pilgrimaged across a mountain between Pont-y-pridd and Caerphilly Castle, Glamorganshire.

The mountain Rambler must often have noticed, about this period, the relics of a custom once highly honoured in olden times—the *Rush-gathering*, an occupation now entirely abandoned to the solitary mountain cotter, who, with his feeble *rush*-light, which he has himself divested of its epidermis and coated with fat, vainly attempts to throw a feeble ray in the long winter evenings upon the desolate aspect of his dark and damp habitation. Yet when Rushes strewed the floors of the palaces trodden by the Plantagenets and the Tudors, and when the fairest lady of the land had no softer carpet on which to place her foot, in her apartment, the Rush (*Juncus*) was highly honoured, and the cutting and gathering of it, when it had attained its highest growth, was celebrated with delight by

young and old, and the last load of its green pointed leaves adorned with showy decorations and preceded in gay procession. "More Rushes—more Rushes!" Shakspeare makes a Groom exclaim at the coronation of Henry V.; and as our ancestors rarely washed their floors, and carpets were unknown, it was necessary to cover, at least, the dirt upon the floors, and hence Rushes were employed for this purpose. Hentzner, in his Itinerary, mentioning Queen Elizabeth's Presence Chamber, at Greenwich, says, "the floor, after the English fashion, was strewed with *hay*," meaning *Rushes*. The churches were strewed in the same way at particular festivals. In ancient times the parishioners brought Rushes at the feast of the dedication, and hence the festivity was called *Rush-bearing*. But even plants and flowers become divested in the roll of time of their celebrity, and rushes, banished from the palace and mansion, are now trodden only by the sportsman, the botanist, or the peasant. Yet to the latter, still, perhaps, as Clare has intimated, they may add an item to the scanty catalogue of his joys of recollection, showing that the humblest minds picture pleasing images to themselves, even from a tuft of rushes.

"Ah! on this bank how happy have I felt,
When here I sat and mutter'd nameless songs,
And with the shepherd's boy and neatherd knelt
Upon yon *Rush-beds*, plaiting whips and thongs." *

Summer! ah, where has summer been this year? is often a common exclamation at its close, for in un-

* Before the introduction of earthenware into Britain, platters, made of twisted rushes, served instead of plates and dishes in the rural districts; and thin cakes, baked in the pan, were placed upon this simple equipage.

genial years scarcely have we been able to obtain a glimpse of it, before it is already perceived waning away. Fine or wet, the flowers spring and fade, and the profusion of composite or syngenesious ones now perceptible, gives serious warning that the summer is declining and the days shortening. On the river side the Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) spreads its golden disc, gilding the bank; the Hawkweeds muster numerous on the walls; the bristly-leaved *Pichris echioides*, and grove Hawkweed (*Hieracium subaudum*), in the woods; other species appear throwing a golden hue upon the aftermath of meadows, or limestone banks; and the Fleabane (*Inula dysenterica*), opens its specious disc upon the last days of August. Other signs are, alas! not wanting—the berries of the Mountain Ash are flushed; those of the water Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*), and the *Rhamnus frangula* show their crimson beauties impending above the deep-flowing streams; the Willow-herbs (*Epilobium*) empurple the beds of rivulets and wet ditches, and the *Mints* are beginning to blossom. Now the great Mullein or Hag Taper (*Verbascum thapsus*), shows its “flannel leaves” and lofty spike of yellow flowers in perfection, like a huge torch in the dusk of evening; and others, of the same species flash gloriously by way sides or gardens. In certain spots the tall Dyer’s Weed (*Rhus typhina*), is very conspicuous, and the starry Scabious (*Scabiosa arvensis*), lifts its flowers of regal purple high in air. The little Centaury (*Chironia centauria*), named from Chiron the centaur, about this time adorns many a bank with its bright pink flowers; and the hedges are over-run with the Ramping Fumi-

tory, the brilliant violet clusters of the tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*), the pink flowers of the Everlasting Pea (*Lathyrus sylvestris*), and the conspicuous white bells of the great Convolvulus (*C. sepium*). For a transient moment the declining sun spangles the glorious scene—woods, meadows, corn-fields stretching in far perspective, revel in his gorgeous radiance ; the deep hollows of the mountains are plunged into sombre shadow, while their solemn brows, in long succession, catch the sunny smile that rests not long upon them, lest it should illumine too much their sullen dignity. The setting sun is lost in a coloured haze of lurid crimson, and amidst the impending gloom of evening, and the rising mists that now slowly creep along the huge sullen mountain crowns, I find myself alone and deserted amidst the cliffs and fissures of the Skirrid Vawr, struggling for egress from its masses of broken stones, wild thickets, wet ravines, and thick set masses of entangled brakes.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR AUGUST.

THEY who study, in detail, the Sea Weeds, now so profusely scattered upon the sea shore, must consult the admirable "*Algæ Britannicæ*" of Dr. Greville, and the beautiful figures of the English Botany, so necessary in examining this exceedingly intricate tribe. The *Fucales*, or Sea Weeds, have been formed into three sections—*Fucinae*, *Florinae*, and *Ulvinae*. Of the two former, Professor Burnett has observed, that "the British seas afford examples of most of the types of these two very extensive sections, which, though intimately allied, have been, from the colour of the fronds, distinguished into two groups, the *Florinae* and the true *Fucinae*: the first of which are of a membranaceous or cartilaginous structure, and seldom change much in drying. The second, or true *Fucinae* are more or less densely fibrous, and mostly become of a dingy black when dried. In the fresh state, likewise, the *Florinae* have showy pink or purple fronds, the sporidia being also purple, while in the *Fucinae* the fronds are of an olive green, and the sporidia black." * Most persons bring a *Fucus*, of some species, as a memento, from the coast, and this, hung up, acts as an indicative hygrometer. To the zoologist the *fuci* are, by means, inutile. Dr. Johnstone has remarked of the edible kind (*Laminaria esculenta*), that "during storms great numbers of this large species are torn from the rocks and cast on shore, bearing with them a rich harvest to the naturalist. In the crevices of the matted roots, shells and worms, of various kinds and singular structure, find shelter, or a secure place for constructing

* Burnett's Botany, p. 107.

their furrows ; and many elegant corallines spring up between them, to appearance trees in miniature, but, in reality, cities full of living inhabitants. The more delicate and richly coloured Sea-weeds are parasitical on the stem ; while the broad frond affords an ample field for many pretty shell-fish to feed and course upon." *

The Hon. W. H. Harvey, has now made a new arrangement of this curious tribe, characterized by the colours of the seeds, in his recent "*Manual of the British Algæ*," which is a work that should be in the hands of every student of marine botany. As a proof of what may be effected by industry and observation, Mr. Harvey refers to the "*Algæ Danmonienses, published and sold by Mary Wyatt, Dealer in Shells, Torquay*;" which is a work of four volumes, composed of 234 *actual specimens* of as many species of Sea-Weeds, all beautifully dried, and correctly named. For a lady residing near the sea shore, the formation of a volume of this description is a most elegant, and cannot fail to prove a most interesting occupation. How delightful it is on the still calm day of an ebb-tide, to watch the green isolated pools, left among the dark rocks, all teeming with life. The transparent water shows the Star-fish slowly moving its flabby fingers along the bottom ; the *Actinia* is putting forth all its tentacula ; while thickets of Sea-weed, of various tints, wave their arms with solemn motion, as if measuring the time for the return of the tidal wave.

* Flora upon Berwick-upon-Tweed.

WILD FLOWERS OF SEPTEMBER.

CHAP. XX.

NEW IMAGES ARISING IN THE MIND FROM THE PURSUIT OF BOTANY—RARE PLANT AT PENNARD CASTLE, ITS ASPECT, AND RESULTING REFLECTIONS—EXCURSION ON THE BLACK MOUNTAIN ABOVE LLANTONY ABBEY—AUTUMNAL LANDSCAPE—CHARACTERISTIC FLORA OF SEPTEMBER—THE PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS—EVENING PROSPECT FROM THE LITTLE SKIRRID.

“Where meditation leads,
By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
Lov'd haunts like these.”

“The gloom of dark forests, the grandeur of mountains,
The verdure of meads, and the beauty of flowers ;
The seclusion of valleys, the freshness of fountains,
The sequester'd delights of the loveliest bowers.”

BERNARD BARTON.

I HAVE before remarked the fresh inlet of ideas opened to the mind by a minute attention to the floral gems that so gorgeously ornament earth's undulating bosom ; so that, even a moderate acquaintance with botanical science, places in the hands and unfolds to the view, as Dr. Arnott has remarked—“keys which which give admission to the most delightful gardens which fancy can picture—a magic power which unveils the face of the universe, and discloses endless charms

of which ignorance never dreams." I have constantly found the truth of this in all my rambles, and hence I feel great pleasure whenever I meet with any person willing to receive on his mind the impress of new images, before unthought of or unknown; and this happens not unfrequently. A short time since, I was seeking for the remains of Pennard Castle, in the peninsula of Gower, about eight miles west of Swansea, where former botanists have recorded the habitat of a rare plant, the *Draba aizoides*, which is met with nowhere else in Britain. I had got into a mountain track among scattered white-washed cottages, overlooked by a rough old veteran of a church tower, that seemed, with its overhanging battlements and narrow loopholes, more like the refuge of beaten warriors than the hallowed receptacle for harmless bells; and hence obtained a direction to a time-worn brother on the steep hill beyond. In the little cemetery with its humble mounds of rustic flowers, the old parish clerk was making hay alone, and paused at his labour, as I bent beneath the narrow gateway. "It's a weary track, Sir, to the old castle," said he, "and it is all so surrounded and choked up with sand, that it is not easy to get at; indeed, it is long since I have been there. But if you can wait till I have turned this hay, I will e'en go with you." Having descended a long wearisome lane, we entered upon a wild and barren assemblage of sandy hummocks, among which I looked for some time in vain for the castle; and the old man assured me that a town formerly stood here, which had been overwhelmed with sand, wafted over from Ireland in one night, and at times he said part of the walls and

houses were visible. I did not attempt to combat a tradition, which seemed a favourite theme with him, and in proof of which, he alledged the sand here to differ from any in the neighbourhood, but looked out for the plant I had in view, and we had scarcely reached a ruined pointed arch leading to the enclosed court, when I perceived upon the tower that stands upon the very verge of a limestone rock. the object I was in quest of, growing there in great profusion and luxuriance. The old man, attentive to my motions, soon assisted me in gathering specimens, and I noticed that he filled his own hat also ; for he remarked that it was strange that he had never before observed the plant himself, and he would now cultivate it in his own garden. As it is an early flowerer it is an acquisition to any rock-work, and if, at a future period I may find the flower diffused from garden to garden, by the care of the old clerk, I shall not have pointed it out to him in vain ; for what pleasing images may arise in a host of breasts from one favourite or remembered plant, even in a cottage garden. “ I know nothing of the names of flowers,” said an intelligent rustic once to me, “ but when I am travelling from place to place with my cart, and see a pretty flower in the hedge, I am unable to resist stopping to pluck and admire it !” Ah ! nature awakens up, even in the rudest breasts, and kindles the divine spark within them ; and yet I have heard persons who, no doubt, would fain be thought pre-eminent in wisdom, temperance, and piety, demurely cry, on looking upon the collected treasures of many a year—that, no doubt, such things might be interesting to those who had a taste for them, if they

did not lead the mind from higher things; as if any objects placed before the contemplation of man by Infinite Wisdom, could be either ignoble, debasing, or unworthy of the minutest attention.*

But away with all disparaging critics of our glorious pursuit. Are we not now led by its love among delicious solitudes, where the fragrant heather gives instructive lessons as its pink bells glisten far over rock and fell—where the thin air fans our panting frame, inspiring us, at the same time, with purer thoughts, nobler aspirations, and sublimer reflections? It is so. And then the outer man, is not *that* advantaged?—purer air has displaced the city fog, a genial glow diffuses itself over the previously pallid face, and health crowns the moistened brow with a wreath of flowerets and green herbs, glistening with mountain dew. So

* It may not be amiss here to record the uniform piety of Linnæus amidst all his multiform pursuits, as a proof that there is nothing in the study of science, rightly considered, inimical to religion—in natural history most assuredly the contrary. When Linnæus visited England, and for the first time of his life beheld the Gorse in flower, he fell on his knees and offered thanks to God for permitting him to enjoy this gratifying spectacle. Equally characteristic is his apostrophe to the Deity, in his inaugural oration before the University of Upsal, on his taking possession of the chair of Physic in that University.—“O omnipotent God, I humbly offer up my thanksgiving for the immense benefits that have been heaped upon me through thy gracious protection and providence. Thou from my youth upwards hast so led me by the hand, hast so directed my footsteps, that I have grown up in the simplicity and innocence of life, and in the most ardent pursuit after knowledge. I give thee thanks for that thou hast ever preserved me in all my journies through my native and foreign countries, amidst so many dangers, that surrounded me on every side. That in the rest of my life, amidst the heaviest burthens of poverty, and other inconveniences, thou wast always present to support me with thy almighty assistance. Lastly, that amidst so many vicissitudes of fortune, to which I have been exposed, amongst all the goods, I say, and evils, the joyful and gloomy, the pleasing and disagreeable circumstances of life, thou endowedst me with an equal, constant, manly, and superior spirit, on every occasion.”—*Amæn. Acad.*, vol. ii.

I experienced, to its full extent, when a few autumns ago two friends and myself climbed up the Black Mountain from the vale of Ewias, and progressed up a rough torrent's bed, now overgrown with tortuous drooping birches and mountain ash, now rude with displaced slabs, among which the chafed waters brawled and splashed, and the brown Dipper flapped his wings ; or barring the way with steep walls of verdant moss, over which the stream murmured and bubbled amidst its rocks and crags, of which one in the centre bore a beautiful Crowberry Bush (*Empetrum nigrum*), laden with its sable fruit, and many beautiful patches of heath gleamed on the sides of the dingle. Far below, distance lending enchantment to the view, the broken towers and arches of Llantony Abbey stood grey and desolate in the sober hues of evening ; and above and around us, the dark frowning eternal heath-clad hills formed in solemn magnificence a grand but broken amphitheatre, rounded by the action of waters long since passed away, but still bearing on their barren heads the pristine traces of stern desolation that ages have not taught to subside even before the smile of summer ; while solemn, nay even terrific, must be the aspect of these hills amidst the wailing storms of winter.

Now, however, we could say with Wordsworth, as we threw ourselves panting on the bright thick and soft Heather to take a transient but delicious rest—

“ Ah ! what a sweet recess, thought I, is here !
Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
Upon a bed of *Heath* ;—full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy
Among the mountains ; never one like this ;
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure.

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—In rugged arms how soft it seems to lie,
How tenderly protected! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth,
The planet in its nakedness; were this
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single in the breathing world,
It could not be more quiet."

Nearer the summit of the mountain we came upon a mass of Bilberry bushes (*Vaccinium myrtillus*), whose purple acid fruit we found peculiarly grateful, and the very summit was adorned with the beautiful blushing fruit of the Cowberry (*Vaccinium Vitis-idaea*), whose evergreen box-like leaves always present a refreshing aspect. Having finished our ossianic reflections upon the dark hill-top, mirth conducted us down:—for after starting a covey of red grouse, on we dashed head over heels down the mountain side, often kissing the turf in our swift descent, and bounding over the dashing stream at the bottom, till not without a feeling of joy that our toils were completed, we found ourselves regaled with the fragrant China herb in the parlour of the southern entrance tower of the Abbey, served by fair hands, and cheered with bright eyes. Truly we enjoyed ourselves, till the grey mist of evening shrouding the scene, urged our departure—but ere we quite reached home, the grey spirit of the mountain starting after us, blew in sleet and rain one parting memento upon our recollections.

Such scenes as these will ever and anon refresh the view of the Botanical Looker-out, and invigorate his exertions, and not in vain do they occur, for while they rest upon the past like the ruddy glow of sunset streaking the dull gloom of twilight, their remembrance

acts as stimuli to the graver duties and researches of the study—so that the labours of the one continually prompts to the enjoyment of the other. A modern poet has thus very pleasingly depicted the sensations that the sight of a single flower may bring to the mind when contemplated beneath “the open heaven,” and forgetful of the unquiet world—

“A flow’r is not a flow’r alone,
A thousand sanctities invest it;
And as they form a radiant zone,
Around its simple beauty thrown,
Their magic tints become its own,
As if their spirit had possess’d it.

The precious things of heav’n—the dew
That on the turf beneath it trembled;
The distant landscape’s tender blue,
The twilight of the woods that threw
Their solemn shadows where it grew,
Are at its potent call assembled.

And while a simple plant, for me
Brings all these varied charms together,
I hear the murmurs of the bee,
The splendour of the skies I see,
And breathe those airs that wander free.
O’er banks of thyme and blooming heather.”*

And now, with botanical exploration thus pictured, although my gun is not hoisted on my shoulder, may I not exclaim with Allan Cunningham—

“Quoth I, fair lass, wilt thou gang wi’ me,
Where black-cocks crow, and plovers cry?”

for at this season, when the autumnal sun faintly strug-

* From an Ode by Douglas Allport.

gles with mountain masses of enormous clouds, and the green earth is fresh from frequent showers, dashing across the landscape, while the glorious arch of promise rests magnificent on wood or hill, the daintiest foot need not fear the fatigue of a hilly ascent; and who that has once tripped upon the hoary reindeer moss, stood upon the time-worn slab crusted with the tartareous lichen, or sunk to dream upon the blooming heather stretching far upon the mountain side, but must long dwell upon the scene that then rose in wild seclusion with still recurring enthusiasm.

But amidst the empurpling hues of the Devil's-bit Scabious (*Scabiosa succisa*), and the bright yellow blossoms of the Cow-Wheat (*Melampyrum*), we now descend the deep sides of a glen walled in on either side with broken rocks, whose lofty heads shadow the dingle with sepulchral gloom. There rest we on the narrow bridge arching the gulf, where the raving waters, red with the slaughtered soil, roar, splash, and struggle, while on the masses of stones that lie around in confused disorder, vast whirl-holes are engraved as vestiges of former watery warfare. The irrecoverable plunge hurries the stream into profound darkness, beyond the reach of vision, and its further course, like the unknown future, is shrouded in the solemn gloom of blasted yews and old battered beeches, whose fantastic boles rooted into the rifted rock, swell out into the strangest and most grotesque forms. In such hidden recesses, among the dead fungoid masses of beech-leaves that thickly strew the ground, the scrutinizing eye may sometimes detect the curious parasitical *Monotropa Hypopitys*, whose brown withered

aspect, and brown flowers, renders it almost inconspicuous in the twilight groves. The fleshy clustered radicles are covered with hairy fibres, by which it appears connected with the rootlets of the beech, and thus, probably, obtains nutriment from them.* It exhales a strong characteristic primrose-like scent.

The wild Flora of September partakes of the colder hues which the waning year now insensibly, as the brighter flowers fade, mixes up with the changing aspect of things. The various Mints (*Mentha*), as Spearmint, Peppermint, Watermint, Redmint, &c., now every where present their whorled or capitate pale purple flowers on the sides of rivers, brooks, and springs. In moist spots, too, the Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*), shows its roseate petals glistening with dew; and the Virgin's Bower (*Clematis vitalba*), trails its pale starry globes in assembled multitudes upon the hedges, or about limestone rocks. But the most certain indication of the approach of Autumn is shown by the pale purple petals and long white tubes of the Autumnal Crocus or Meadow-saffron (*Colchicum autumnale*), commonly called, though rather indelicately, "Naked Ladies," which invariably presents itself in moist meadows by the first of September—and where it abounds, as it does in profusion by the margin of the Severn, and often in wild hilly places, far from the haunt of busy life, the appearance it presents in wide patches of delicate purple, like fairy islets amidst the grassy aftermath, is truly beautiful. But, as is often the case in the vegetable world, a moral lies shrouded

* See Phytologist, Vol. 1. p. 98, for a paper by the Author on the parasitic growth of this curious plant.

within this surface of beauty—for destruction lurks concealed in its lap. Its foliage is a most virulent poison to cattle, and great numbers have been, at various times, destroyed by eating its foliage. It is, however, very remarkable, that the leaves and fruit never appear till the following Spring after the flower ; and thus in the Autumn, when the flowers *only* arise, no danger is to be apprehended from them, and the meadows where the plant abounds being seldom grazed in the Spring, mischief is for the most part avoided. Every agriculturist should be especially careful that the capsule of the saffron, with its three long ribbon-like leaves, is not present in the *vernal* pastures where he turns his stock to graze, for if it be, and the cattle have been long deprived of green food, they will ravenously eat it, and fall down dead in a very few hours after.

About pools, moist spots on heaths, and little rills of clear water, several plants now appear of humble stature, which in the more gorgeous days of Summer might pass unnoticed—but the botanist detects them as indicating the movements of Flora's dial, whose hands are now resting on almost the last fresh flowers of the year. Among these the Bur Marigolds (*Bidens tripartita et cernua*), claim attention ; the purple Marsh Wound-wort (*Stachys Palustris*), the white flowered Gipsy-wort (*Lycopus Europæus*), and the blue Skull-caps (*Scutellaria*), so called from the singular aspect of the calyx after the carolla has fallen. The small Skull-cap is a common denizen of mountain bogs, where in company with the yellow kingspear, the ivy-leaved bell-flower, the rose-pimpernel, and the

flossy cotton-grass, it is seen with constant pleasure by the wandering botanist. In the vicinity of buildings the once consecrated Vervain now rises in tall tufts, and the rank Wormwood tells of abandonment and desolation. A curious tribe of cottony herbs, whose coloured permanent calyces of yellow, red, white, brown, or black, are commonly known as "everlasting flowers;" the "*immortelles*" of the French,* are many of them now in full perfection. The Pearly Everlasting (*Gnaphalium margaritaceum*), spreads its silver flowers abundantly upon the banks of the river Rhymny, in Glamorganshire, and is a favourite adornment of the secluded cemeteries of South Wales. Some of the African species are very beautiful, especially one from the Cape, whose clusters resemble ripe strawberries. A very common British *Gnaphalium*, commonly called Cudweed, was called by old herbalists, *impious*, from the younger flowers rising up and overtopping the older. Another kind (*G. uliginosum*) frequently extends its woolly entangled masses in wet hilly spots, and the upright Cudweed (*G. rectum*), scatters its flossy down in the deep shades of woods.

One of the prettiest floral sights that this month can offer to the eye of the botanical wanderer in wilds

* A recent author, remarking upon the "tubs of *immortelles*" offered for sale in the market of Marseilles, observes, that "For this enduring flower there is always a sure sale—crucifixes, altars, saints, the busts of great men, and of handsome actresses, have all their chaplets of *immortelles*. It is flung upon the stage; it is suspended over the tombstone;—Napoleon, Louis, Charles, have had theirs; Louis Phillipe has his, and Henry Cinq, would, like his predecessors, exhaust the stalls, if opportunity offered. In all this scene-shifting nothing seems permanent but the least permanent of nature's gifts—a flower!"—*SKETCHES IN THE PYRENEES*.

unknown to public view, especially where the dripping fall of fountains beguile the ear, is in the elegant aspect of the fair *Parnassia palustris*, whose stainless argent flowers decorate particular plashy spots at this time. I shall not easily forget the sight of numbers of this most exquisitely beautiful of British flowers, growing amidst emerald moss, close to the very edge of the foaming waters of "THE SEVEN SPRINGS" that pour their overflowing urns into the chrystal Windrush, near Bourton-on-the-water, Gloucestershire, last autumn. They inspired the following lines—

TO THE PARNASSIA PALUSTRIS.

(*Grass of Parnassus.*)

By the brink of the fountain, sweet flow'r
I saw thee for one happy hour ;
 In thy bridal array,
 How beauteous, I say,
 Was thy spotless display
Midst the streamlet's perpetual pour.

I had never beheld thee before
So fair on the rough barren moor ;—
 Like a thought from above,
 Like a vision of—Love,
 Among flowers—a dove,
Was thy aspect on Windrush's shore.

Still fair in the wane of the year
Thy petals and nectaries appear ;—
 Oh ! delectable sight
 To behold thee in white,
 While upon thee alight
The gay red or blue butterflies near.

As a beautiful vision, I think
Of thy blossoms on Windrush's brink ;
In that wildly lone dell
As if bound by a spell,
I shall oft seem to dwell,
Giving Memory a fair silver link.

But evening has surprized us while musing on the summit of the Little Skirrid, near Abergavenny, amidst the wild groves of aged Hollies, Hawthorns, Maples, and Beeches, that surround its lonely verdant brow. The sun has sunk behind a purple cloud, but the winding Usk gleams with mirror-like brightness in the fair valley below, throughout all its undulations. The clouds of evening slowly fold upon the solemn brows of the Black Mountains, darken the head of the Great Skirrid, and cast into deep shadow the majestic wooded buttresses of the Sugar Loaf, whose narrow peak bright above all, rises the acknowledged sovereign of this mountain conclave ; while the eye resting upon the darkened surly Blorenges, vainly attempts to penetrate the gloom that has now settled upon its rocky escarpment, and bathes its ferns and mosses in the dews of night. One lonely light among the woods at its base, alone serves to show by comparison the giant bulk whose indentations have been torn, bared, and riven by the autumn floods and storms. Ye woods, wilds, and solitudes, ere again the tempest raves in terror through your leafy glades, driving the phrenzied streams from their murmuring pebbly beds, and tracing desolation on the flowery meads—ere again the muddy torrent breaks its bounds from the incessant rain, and the blood-red ravine lifts its angry

ensign as a trophy in mid-air, let us retreat from your storm-robed fastnesses in safety.* Now, then, Good Night!

* Just previous to my ramble in Monmouthshire, in the autumn of 1839, after violent rain for some days, the saturated soil on the eastern declivity of the Blorenges gave way, and a torrent of mud and water descended roaring in the shades of night to the Usk below, violently tearing up the earth, overthrowing trees and scattering desolation over fertile fields. When I examined the spot, the turnpike road, for some distance, had been converted into the bed of a stream, rendered totally impassable, and obstructed by fallen trees, that seemed to have been hurried along with the land on which they grew.

FLOWERS OF SEPTEMBER,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XXI.

REFLECTIONS AWAKENED BY A GLANCE AT THE WILDER TRACTS OF FLORA'S DOMINION—SCENE CHANGED, AND "AT HOME" IN THE GARDEN—DAHLIAS, HOLLY-HOCKS, AND SUNFLOWERS, WITH THEIR ASSOCIATIONS—HYDRANGIA, CHINESE ASTER, &C.—ADONIS AUTUMNALIS—SMELLING A GERANIUM—POETICAL IDEAS EMANATING FROM FLOWERS.

"Kata ten Melittan apanthisamenos."—*Lucian*.

Sipping the Flowers like a Bee.

Having given the misty mountains the slip, and left the glens and ravines to their clouds and waters, I now look out upon the softer features of the Flower Garden, where I perceive many of Flora's beauties, that might have received earlier attention, had we not amidst the ruder yet more exciting features of nature's wild haunts, been offering up our devotions in scenes where the foot of man hath but rarely trod, yet where shrouded in desolation and magnificence, the finger of God hath clothed the rugged ravine with verdure, and seated floral beauties in spots where silence and solitude brood moodily in their high fastnesses, that the passing pilgrim as he hastily views the scene, while the whirling thunder-cloud awes his presumption, may long, with cherished feelings, renew the

image of the sanctity of nature in his mind. For if earth be not now a paradise, its solemn peaks whitened with snow or bathed by the misty cloud—its deep ravines murmuring with a thousand streams from every labyrinthal mossy hollow—its sleeping lakes reflecting in their still bosoms the roseate flush of morn or sunset—and its black precipitous crags coloured with the red lychnis, purple saxifrage, or silver sandwort—all raise a paradise of rapt emotions in the heart, transcendant beyond language. Earth and its inhabitant man, then seem

“Not less than Archangel ruin'd,” *

so soothing, affecting, and elevating, is the bright yet melancholy prospect of the most glorious earthly scenes. We cannot, however, retain our elevation long, but must return to the tamer scenes below. Perhaps, therefore, a glance at *domesticated flowers*, may as a contrast to the wilder tracts of Flora's dominion not have an unpleasing effect, and like a rest at an inn, refresh the mind, tired with the long contemplation of heaths and hills, and restore its healthful longings for renewed searches amidst the fascinations of mountain scenery. But we are now “at home,”—so as the sunbeams flame above the morning mist with tempting brightness, throw we up the drawing-room windows, and “look out” upon the terrace through the wide parterre.

Chief among the flowers yet conspicuous in the garden, is the regal Dahlia, with its drooping globes of crimson, scarlet, marone, yellow, and white, whose innumerable varieties are the glory of floriculture,

* Milton.

and the just pride of the nurseryman. They will now spread their gorgeous array till the first frosts wither them at one fell stroke, and render it necessary to take up their roots for preservation through the winter. The name commemorates Dahl, a Swedish botanist thus honoured by Cavanilles a Spanish botanist, in 1791. Three species only are known, all natives of Mexico, but the only one from which the garden plants are derived is *D. variabilis*.* This flower furnishes a curious instance of the effects of cultivation upon the wild products of nature, for in its native country it is described as a bushy herbaceous plant, with single purple or lilac flowers, having little pretensions to beauty. It has now been cultivated in Europe for about forty years. During this period many millions of plants have been raised from seeds, and under almost every possible variation of climate; and anomalies the most singular, not only in colour, but in general constitution and physiological structure, have been obtained. The colour of the flower has been altered from pale yellow or lilac, to every hue of red, purple, or yellow, to pure scarlet and to deepest marone, or has even been wholly discharged from the radial florets in the white varieties. The period of flowering has been accelerated nearly two months; and the tall rank Mexican weed has been in some instances reduced to a trim bush, emulating the Peony in dwarfishness. The yellow inconspicuous florets of the disk have been expelled to make room for the showy deep-coloured florets of the ray: what is more re-

* Among the native Mexicans the Dahlia was considered as the flower of the dead that "ghosts come to snuff at."

markable still, the same yellow inconspicuous florets of the disk have been enlarged, and stained with rich marone, so as to rival the colours of the ray, without losing their own peculiarity of form ; and, finally, the whole foliage and bearing of the plant has been altered by the substitution of simple leaves for compound ones. Several hundred varieties of Dahlias are now offered for sale by nurserymen ; and the prizes offered at Horticultural Exhibitions, and the stimulus of emulation among gardeners and amateurs, has increased the rage for new forms of the plant to such a degree, that perhaps a Dahlia-mania may run its exciting round in our day, more general, if not so dangerous or pernicious as the Tulipomania that affected the florists of the seventeenth century. Phillips, in his *Flora Historica*, says, the Dahlia, in floral language, is to be regarded as the emblem of *instability* ; as it was introduced into this country by Lady Bute in 1789, the year of the French revolution ; then lost from bad management—and again introduced by Lady Holland in 1804, when Napoleon was proclaimed Emperor of the French ; while it was not till 1814 that the downfall of the Emperor, and the consequent peace, enabled gardeners to obtain that copious supply of roots and seed from France, which has resulted in the cultivation of the Dahlia in the extensive manner that we now witness, with such ornamental effect, in the autumnal parterre.

Beautiful as the Dahlia has been made, the old favourite of rustic gardens, the Hollyhock is not to be forgotten. The Dahlia is for the future, and will probably be copiously praised by the lyrists of the rising

generation, to whose care we commend the image of Phillips—that the Dahlia will adorn our groves as gas now does our towns; but the Hollyhock cherishes the images of olden days, associated with timbered picturesque farm houses, thatched cottages with their humble adornments, and old massive time-worn mansions in secluded parts of the country. Here the Hollyhock's lofty stems and bright specious, though homely, mallow-like flowers, in their varieties of rose, orange, chesnut, or blackish purple, are well associated with the honeysuckled porch, the trim strait boxen walk, the terrace bounded by its privet or trim holly hedge, the beehive stand, and the formal peacocks clipped in yew, pecking at each other. The Hollyhock is a malvaceous plant of the genus *Alcea*, and appears to have been introduced from Syria. It grows wild also in Siberia, China, and Africa, and is one of our oldest garden flowers. The late period to which it extends its floral show renders it worthy of attention in large gardens and pleasure grounds.

Another old tenant of the parterre is sure, at this season, to attract the eye, with its flaunting staring disk of golden rays, elevated upon a tall stalk dilated to its utmost height. This is the Sun-flower (*Helianthus*), celebrated of old as

——“The lofty follower of the sun
Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves
Drooping all night, and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.”

Various poets have dwelt upon this as a favourite idea, and even philosophers have confirmed their reports of

the Sunflower's turning itself round with the course of the sun.* Ovid says—

“ Still the lov'd object the fond leaves pursue,
Still move their root the moving sun to view.”

Dr. Hunter, in his notes to “Evelyn's Sylva,” says “the story of the Sunflower in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is confirmed by daily observation; and Sir J. E. Smith absolutely states that the stem is compressed to facilitate the movements of the flower, which, “after following the sun all day, returns after sun-set to the east.” Moore, in his *Irish Melodies*, has seized upon the same simile, in the following beautiful stanza—

“ Oh the heart that has truly lov'd, never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close;
As the Sunflower turns to his God when he sets,
The same look which he had when he rose.

Unfortunately, however, for these fine images, this “same look,” as Paddy might say, ‘is often *no look at all* ;’ for many and many's the time we have seen Sunflowers obdurately pointing to the north all day long, having good cause, no doubt, to be sulky with the sun; and it is by no means uncommon in a group of Sunflowers, to perceive their staring dial-like countenances pointing to every quarter of the compass. The French have perpetuated this error in their name

* Dr. Darwin in his “*Loves of the Plants*,” could not of course afford to dispense with so poetical a simile, but quotes Hales' *Vegetable Staticks* for the fact that “the Sunflower follows the course of the sun by nutation, not by twisting its stem.” In his text the Dr. says—

“ With zealous step he climbs the upland lawn,
And bows in homage to the rising dawn;
Imbibes with eagle eye the golden ray,
And watches, as it moves, the orb of day.”

Tournesol; though, no doubt, as old Gerard long ago observed, "the flower of the Sunne is called in Latine Flos Solis, taking that name from those that have reported it to turne with the sunne, the which I could never observe, although I have endeavoured to find out the truth of it; but I rather thinke it was so called, because, it doth resemble the radiant beames of the Sunne, whereupon some have called it *Corona Solis*, and *Sol Indianus*, the Indian Sunflower." The Sunflower was brought by the Spaniards from Peru, where it appears it was consecrated by the Peruvians to the worship of the bright luminary of day; and the Virgins of the Sun, when officiating in their temples, were crowned with golden *helianthi*, wearing some on their breasts, and holding others in their hands, which is described as forming a spectacle of imposing grandeur. Sunflowers, with all their gaudiness, should, however, be but sparingly scattered in a garden, on the principle—that all is not gold that glitters. To the botanist the Sunflower offers a good study of the 19th class of Linnæus—*Syngenesia*, where one common receptacle encloses an assemblage of florets of different characters. The florets of the ray form the golden fringe of petals or *ligulate* florets, which are all for show, and guard what we may call the seraglio within: since this flower belongs to the "*Polygamia frustranea*," where the radiate florets having neither stamens or pistils cannot produce seeds, and, by a poetical image, are therefore inferred to be made *in vain*, or for show only. The florets of the disk are, however, *tubular*, each having five anthers, with a single pistil crowned by a bipartite stigma, and

each of the florets produces a seed. The fertile florets are in general so numerous, that 2,362 seeds have been taken from the disc of a single flower, and hence, in rural spots, these seeds are preserved for fattening poultry, and in the United States are pressed for the oil they contain. From what has been observed, it is obvious, that the more double a syngenesious flower becomes, the less seed it can produce, as this fullness of flower, as gardeners call it, is caused by the change of *tubular* into *ligulate* florets, or those that are inconspicuous and produce seed, into those that are specious and produce none; and therefore those that are *all show* produce no fruit at all—a moral induction, which I need not attempt to sharpen in further detail.

As a flower suited for the base of the porch or arbour, the *Hydrangea* must not be forgotten here; the large bunches it forms presenting a very handsome appearance. The flowers, from over-development, are almost always barren, and very variable in their colour, passing through every shade of green and blue to red. In peat earth, especially, they assume a rich blue tint; yet, in rustic gardens, plants, with both red and blue flowers, sometimes present themselves in the same soil, with a fine ornamental effect. A moist situation is most favourable to the luxuriant development of the *Hydrangea*.

At this period of the year, the trailing *Nasturtium* (*Tropæolum majus*),* becomes a great ornament to the

* The Latin name refers to the fancied *trophies* its flowers and leaves form—likened to empty helmets and shields. The English name points out its affinity in smell, taste, and general properties, to the *Nasturtia*, or land and water cresses, a very curious circumstance in plants belonging to different natural families. The capsules, in particular, make a very wholesome pickle.

garden, especially if it be trained upon trellis-work, or against a wall, its brilliant orange flowers flashing gorgeously upon the eye. The extent and height to which it will spread is really wonderful; and it is curious to observe that the long petioles of its remarkable leaves perform the office of tendrils, and curling round any object near them, support the plant high in air, though to an inattentive observer it is not, at first sight, obvious how this is done. The leaf of the *Nasturtium* may be said to form a living vegetable Mackintosh, or rather indeed, is far superior to that useful article, for not only is it impervious to rain, but no wet has power even to moisten its surface, rolling quickly off in silver globules. The blossoms of this Peruvian plant occasionally emit electric sparks in the twilight.

One of the principal embellishments of the autumnal parterre is the Chinese Aster or Starwort (*Aster Chinensis*), now a common denizen of European gardens, though introduced from China only about a century ago. The French name of *Queen Daisie* (*Reine Marguerite*) given to it, shows it to be of the same class as our humble "wee modest crimson-tipped flower," which, though now lost sight of, will not be seen without pleasure by the early wanderer of the ensuing spring. It is said that in China the varieties of Asters are so disposed as to rival in brilliancy the richest patterns of the carpets of Persia, or the most curious figures that the artist in fillagree can devise. The Aster is well adapted to variegate the shrubbery, as its showy disc exhibits its bright rays even to November. China has contributed another

specious gift to the florist in the late flowering *Chrysanthemum*, the name of which, golden flower, is, however inapplicable, as a great number of them bear silver, pink, lilac, or purple, as well as yellow flowers; but this error it is rather too late now to repair, unless any poet feels inclined to marry to immortal verse the Chinese names of *Yok qui lung kok fa*, and *Pak tseen yong kok fa*, by which appellations the white varieties of the *Chrysanthemums* are known in China. It has been remarked that this favourite flower of the Mandarins has contributed to shorten the floral winter more than any exotic, as when cultivated in pots and placed out in favourable weather, its flowers will continue in full beauty to adorn the halls and vestibules of mansions, at Christmas, in places where tender plants could not endure to stand. But our limits forbid further particularization in detail, and we can only glance at the crimson *Rudbeckia*, the African and French Marygolds (*Tagetes*), which often appear very splendid and beautiful in contrast with the deep purple Asters, and the tall glittering Golden-Rods (*Solidago viminea*), as contributing to that peculiar glow, which, under the influence of a bright sun, has at this season so exciting an effect.

In closing this floral sketch, one little characteristic flower, seen in almost every garden at this time, must not be forgotten, as it commemorates the old classical story of Venus and Adonis, the crimson or deep scarlet flowers of the little *Adonis autumnalis* being stated to have received their tinge from the blood of the beautiful hunter. Unfortunately, however, botany like law has its "glorious uncertainties,"

and this is one of them ; for it has been gravely remarked, that “ whether the goddess of beauty changed her lover into this plant or the *Anemone*, would be difficult to decide, since the Linnean system of dividing plants into families did not exist when the gods and goddesses made love upon earth ; and previous to the time of the Swedish botanist, the *Adonis* was considered to be one of the *Anemonies*, which it greatly resembles.” In answer to this doubt, I can only alledge as in the case of the celebrated something black as a crow, that the flower of the *Adonis* is at any rate as red as blood, whether the vital current of the goddess lover ever came in contact with its petals or not. And now, if any one should take exception at this flower-sipping as an idle or unprofitable employment, I shall merely, in defence of my *floration*, make this *quotation* from the ambling *versification* of the once admired Cowley, who thus apostrophizes on the subject—

“ Who, that hath reason and his smell,
Would not among Roses and Jasmine dwell,
Rather than all his spirits choke
With exhalations of dirt and smoke ? ”

This is certainly a home thrust, and I therefore confidently anticipate that I shall be able to count a pretty considerable number of *noses* in favour of botanical looking-out !

As writers more familiar with the study than the field, often refer sarcastically to “ *mere botanists*,” as if so taken up with system and technical verbiage, as to be incompetent to feel in their souls the divine glories of creation, or even to nourish a meditative or

inspiring thought imbibed from the plants they examine, it may be well to call in the evidence of the uninitiated in science as to the pleasure and instruction derivable from the inspection even of a single leaf. And the following description of the sensations of a novice on first inspecting a *Geranium*, though naively expressed, are not the less intelligible. "I remember after smelling the first leaf of the *rose Geranium*, and also when I received additions to my stock, how I was struck with wonder and amazement at the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, in imparting to the *green leaf* of one plant the fragrance of another, such as the balm, musk, pennyroyal, &c. How condescending to our senses, how indulgent, as it were, even to our childish and playful fancies! It was thus my mind was struck when I smelt the first leaf. Thought I, it is strange that a *green leaf* plucked from a plant no way similar, should possess all the flavour of the *flower* plucked from another." * Ideas like these are the first efforts of poetry in the human mind—thought, analogy, fancy, reflection, and images of purity and loveliness are all awakened in the sensitive mind at the sight of green leaves and opening flowers—even memory sternly surveying the wreck of the past, sadly grasps the fading flowers that alone remain to her of the pictures that have faded away, and these are the talismans that again conjure up departed joys—

"The heart's affections—are they not like Flowers?
In life's first spring they blossom; summer comes,
And 'neath the scorching blaze they droop apace;

* Grant Thorburn's *Forty Years in America*.

Autumn revives them not : in languid groups
They linger still, perchance, by grove or stream,
But Winter frowns, and gives them to the winds ;
They are all wither'd ! ” H. G. BELL.

So adieu to the joys of the garden and its cultivated gems—our last days with the waning year must be devoted entirely to the woods and hills, and the productions of Nature in her wildest haunts.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR SEPTEMBER.

THE gleanings of Flora's fair domain is all that the botanical explorer can reasonably expect in this month of shortened days, bright and exhilarating as are its mornings, and its evenings often glorious with the harvest moon, or lighted up with the grey, green, or ruby-coloured columns of the mystical Aurora Borealis. The fructification of the Roses, and many other shrubs, may now, however, be obtained, and should be carefully examined, as, in botanical definition, the character of the *genus* being taken from the fruit, and as it is often discriminative also with respect to the species, the observer who desires to verify every fact in nature for himself, should take the opportunity only presented at this time, of gathering ripe fruits and berries. Indeed, several shrubs, as the *Euonymus Europæus*, and the *Rhamnus frangula*, are far more conspicuous and beautiful in fruit than in flower, and are more easily detected in the autumnal season than at any other time. The former, loaded with capsules of the brightest pink, when lighted up by a passing sunbeam, is an object of great beauty. On the borders of woods, and in shrubberies, the profusion of berries now exhibited, with their varying tints, from the deep black of the Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), the light orange of the Guelder-rose (*Viburnum Opulus*), and the still deeper orange of the clusters of the Mountain Ash, to the innumerable blood-red *haws* that crowns the lofty hedges, offers by no means an uninteresting or uninteresting spectacle. Besides which, during a ramble at this period, an excitement is created by the birds of various hues and cries, that, attracted by the ripened fruit, are revelling

in the "common feast" now bounteously spread around for all God's creatures. The shrill short scream of the Blackbird, the harsh shriek of the Jay, the chatter of the Magpie, and the solemn cawk of the Rook, resound on all sides among the bushes, as on diverse wing they fly off before the wanderer's disturbing foot—and, see! in that fiery-tinged pear-tree a flock of Fieldfares have just alighted, with dissonant cries, after their aerial sail from the shores of the northmen, and the last Swallow is seen flitting sadly and disconsolately over the saffron-flowered mead.

One of the most singular parasitical plants that Britain produces, the greater Dodder (*Cuscuta europæa*), should be diligently sought by the enquiring botanist, just before harvest-time, among peas, beans, or vetches. It is generally considered a very rare plant, though, in fact, when it does occur, it extends itself as if with the most malicious activity. Though often on the look-out for it, I could never detect it till the last year (1840), when, in passing through a field of vetches at the Berrow, Worcestershire, near the southern termination of the Malvern chain, I was struck with the red appearance of a part of the vetches—it was *the Dodder*, which had enveloped them in an inextricable stringy mass, and had borne them down to the ground in its poisonous embrace, tied like Gulliver's head by every hair. Yet, amidst the red clammy and stringy mass it had formed, the round bosses of delicate wax-like flowers shone with extreme elegance. Since then, a farmer pointed it out to me in a bean-field, not far from my residence, at Forthampton, clasped about some bean-stalks most luxuriantly, but said that it had not occurred there for some years previously. This strikingly illustrates a remark made by Kirby and Spence, in reference to the relations of insects with plants, that "sometimes it happens that only a single opportunity occurs, in a man's life, of seeing certain plants growing wild: such opportunities should never be neg-

lected.”* I have often had occasion to see the force of this admonition, for so many plants might, like *Erica vagans*, be justly termed wanderers, that a curious plant undeniably observed in a particular locality one year, may be sought there, afterwards, without any success. It is remarkable that precisely at the time when the Beans are harvested, the seeds of the Dodder become ripe, and fall to the earth, where they remain, probably, some years before they again vegetate. Many, however, are carried to the bean-stack, and may thus rest in the rick for years, till again called forth, by circumstances, to renew their parasitical depredations.

* Kirby and Spence, Vol. iv. p. 507.

WILD FLOWERS OF OCTOBER.

CHAP. XXII.

AUTUMNAL WEATHER FAVOURABLE FOR EXPLORATION
—ADVENTURE AT MAENTWROG, MERIONETHSHIRE—
FALLS OF FESTINIOG—A BREAKDOWN—ASCENT OF
SNOWDON—PLANTS GATHERED ON ITS LOFTY
ROCKS—A TRUCE TO WANDERING.

“Upon the mountains, gemmed with morning dew,
In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.”

WORDSWORTH.

October is undoubtedly the best month of the year in Britain for the pedestrian wanderer, and therefore by no means unworthy the attention of the “Botanical Explorer.” More especially is it in general favourable for ascending the mountain fastnesses of Wales or Cumberland. The morning opens with all the balminess of spring without its bitter blasts—with all the warmth of summer, without its oppressive glare; sleeping masses of vapour rest in the hollows of the hills like silver lakes; and the first rays of the rising sun glancing upon the fading forest garnishes it with gold, or resting on some old pear-tree, charms the sight with the richest hues of crimson and carmine exhibited by its foliage. In the height of summer it is but rarely that any very extensive view presents itself from a lofty eminence, in this uncertain climate; for either a misty glare obscures the distant horizon in some quarter or other, thunder clouds come whirling about the mountain side, or worse than all, drizzling and

settled rain overwhelms the disappointed explorer of Nature's beauties. But the calm and often cloudless days of autumn generally offer opportunities of the most exciting kind, when no wind blows too rough a cadence, and when the heat generated by exertion is not of that debilitating kind before which, as is frequently the case in the dog-days, the enervated frame sinks in passive and overpowering fatigue. It may, however, be thought that at this late period of the season but few plants can be met with to give zest to botanical ardour, but this is by no means the case, for in favoured sheltered nooks among the hollows of the rocks, many alpine plants continue in flower till overpowered by the frosts of November; while the cryptogamous vegetation of the mountains now appears in fine perfection—*Ferns* of the most delicate structure glisten with a golden green lustre within the dark cavities of the precipices—the *Lichens* stain the sullen rocks with yellow, brown, and purple, or fringe their edges with a hoary beard—and every bubbling spring is surrounded with an emerald carpet, where the *Mosses* lift up to the observant eye their brown *thecæ*, or urns of fructification, either gracefully adorned with a light *calyptra* or veil, or covered as in the *Polytrichi* with a shaggy hairy cap. But to make these observations more obvious, I will detail the proceedings of a botanical excursion I made in the autumn of 1838, in *Snowdonia*, which will enable me to allude to some plants that have not previously fallen under our notice.

I had got, it matters not how, to Maentwrog, Merionethshire, within the confines of that lovely vale

adorned by the graceful windings of the Dwyryd, of which Lord Lyttleton once said, that with the woman one loves, the friend of one's heart, and a good library of books, one might spend an age in it, and think it only a day. Anxious to explore the beauties around, I first started for the two waterfalls formed by the little river Velenryd, one of which is called the Black Cataract. Scrambling down with some difficulty amidst entangling underwood, I reached the stony bed of the river, gloomy even at noon with the masses of dense umbrage around. It was a burning day, and seated on a mossy rock below the fall in this cool recess, I listened to the hoarse splash of the waters, and gazed on the flowers around with a feeling of delighted ecstasy. The tranquil repose of such moments often recurs to the memory amidst the vexations or vacuities of after life, and again presents a healing balm to the perturbed spirits—such are the advantages the votary of nature derives from his pure and vivifying contemplations.

Returning over the wooded bank of the stream, and dashing quickly along a very narrow path that led to a precipitous ledge of rock from whence another waterfall sprang foaming into view, I came into rough collision with a luckless sketcher, who was aiming to *take off* the water, and so closely did our encounter approximate us to the verge of the cliff, that the water was very near *taking off* the pair of us! Chance having thus brought us together, we agreed to travel for the next day in company; but I soon discovered that I had got a *soleless* companion, for as

Sir Walter Scott says of the Palmer in Marmion, so might I say of my friend of the waterfall—

“His sandals were with travel tore,”

and could scarcely be said to be in tenantable repair, while his diminutive person, armed with huge umbrella, and graced with sketch book and concave glasses, gave him a characteristic and somewhat ludicrous appearance. Having been the day before at the Falls of Festiniog, I obtained his direction to them, proceeding early the following morning up the romantic vale, and thus obtained specimens of the pretty *Gnaphalium sylvaticum*, as well as of a rare *Rubus* that grows above the bridge between the two falls of the Cynfael. The Mountain Ash (*Pyrus aucuparia*), profusely adorned with pendant fruit of the most brilliant red, here presented itself, I think more beautifully than I have any where before seen it, shrouding the steep rocks excavated to a fearful depth by the “fierce footsteps” of the mountain torrent.

“The Mountain Ash

No eye can overlook, when mid a grove
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head
Deck'd with autumnal berries that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms.” *

In the deep chasm, cut out by the river, stands an isolated pinnacle of rock, cracked and riven as if by some tremendous storm or convulsion of nature, and where, according to traditional report, the mystic rites of enchantment were once performed. For “a deed without a name,” truly such a locality is not ill

* Wordsworth.

adapted—around the shattered pile the water roughly roars in its progress on the one hand, or on the other forms sullen pools black as obsidian, into whose treacherous depths it would not be enviable to fall; broken cliffs rise on either side so lofty, and so shaggy with the mingled foliage of the sable Yew and Wytch Elm, that day-light struggles almost in vain to penetrate into the murky glen, while the maddening plunge of the stream, as it leaps out of this Stygian den, is alone heard to break the stillness around “the Enchanter’s chair,” by its intermitting roar. In the grounds of Tan y Bwlch, I observed *Parmelia herbacea* and *Sticta pulmonaria*, in great abundance and luxuriance, and bearing the finest fructification.

But to return to my uncalceated friend. An unexpected bump had brought us in contact *with*, and another incidental shake in life’s journey sent us off again at a tangent *from* each other. We had both mounted the Caernarvon mail to get to Beddgelert, but scarcely had we made a start when my companion’s spectacles fell, and were placed *hors de combat*, or fit only for hospital service. He had scarcely recovered from this disaster, which I remarked was a bad omen, when his snuff-box fell, and was with difficulty recovered. His packet of vesture next ventured on a forward movement to his irrepressible chagrin, and last of all *we fell* also—for down tumbled one of our horses as if shot, and in a moment we were all hurried *sans ceremonie* into the dusty road, to advance or retrograde as we thought proper. Ultimately we shook off the mail that had so unkindly shaken off *us*, and walked through the majestic pass of Pont Aber-

glasslyn; and after refreshing at the Beddgelert Hotel, I engaged a car to convey me to Llanberis, where I proposed my unfortunate companion should accompany me, and forget his sorrows; but inconsolable for his broken spectacles, which he said ruined all his prospects, he would go no farther than the turn to Capel Cerig; and, as Bunyan says, "I saw him no more."

As I progressed down the pass of Llanberis, the evening suddenly closed in, the wind moaned cheerlessly in fitful gusts, and Snowdon and his satellites put on their darkest array—nevertheless I determined to ascend the next morning if possible. Over my tea and snug fire at the Dolbadran Castle* (which by the bye with its smiling widow landlady I strongly recommend), I held a consultation with a guide. He was willing enough to convoy me to the summit only, but when he heard that I wanted to climb the precipices of *Clogwyn du yr Arddu* and *Clogwyn y garnedd*, and search about for plants, he begged leave to decline

* Dolbadran Castle itself is a ruined fortalice, of which a shattered round tower now only remains, situated on a rocky eminence, between the Upper and Lower Lakes of Llanberis, and its grey head encompassed with lofty mountains, is reflected in the clear waters with pictorial effect. In the Upper Lake *Lobelia dortmanna*, *Sparganium natans*, *Subularia aquatica*, and *Isoetes lacustris* grow; in and about the Lower Lake, *Nymphaea alba*, *Alisma natans*, *Epilobium angustifolium*, and *Trollius europæus*. I did not examine the woods above, where probably several rarities may be found, as a specimen of *Epipactis ensifolia* was given me by my botanical guide hereafter mentioned, gathered there by him. The intermittent roar from the explosions in the slate quarries seen from this point, comes with fine effect upon the ear, like so many avalanches among the mountains. Very near to and sadly eclipsing the ruined tower of Dolbadran, an immense pile of building called "the Victoria," has been erected of late years for the accommodation of visitors. I would, however, advise the Botanical Explorer to do as I did, and attack "the Castle."

the honour of attending me, as he said the whole day would be occupied —while if it proved fine (as rare a circumstance at Snowdon as red letters in the calendar), he could take three journies with different parties from Llanberis in the same day. There was, however, he told me, a sort of supernumerary guide, who was fond of gathering plants, and probably he might be induced to explore the crags with me.

Next morning a brisk little Welchman, active as the goat of his native mountains, with a tin box on his back, on which was painted "William Williams," presented himself to my inspection, and said that he was so fond of plants, that he would go with me anywhere as long as I pleased. My arrangements were at once made, and we started. The day was fine, and though the up-hill work was a little toilsome and tedious, I experienced no inconvenience except from a furious gust of wind on the more exposed parts of the mountain. An exposure on the bleak acclivity throughout the night, would, however, prove rather serious, as has several times been experienced by incautious tourists. Williams told me of an instance that fell under his own cognizance. A gentleman who formed one of a party who had ascended to the Snowdonian monarch, suddenly took it into his head when on the summit, that he would proceed to Caernarvon instead of returning back with his friends to Llanberis. The Caernarvon road being clearly visible, he felt no doubt of finding his way, and ridiculed every persuasion offered to divert him from his purpose. The following morning a party was ascending Snowdon, about four o'clock, to see the sun rise, when

they were alarmed by shouts and cries of distress from the Beddgelert side of the mountain. Williams, one of the attendants of the party, hastened down to the quarter from whence the cries proceeded, when he discovered the same gentleman who had left his party the day before, in a dreadfully cold and exhausted state from long wandering without food, and exposure to the night air. It appeared that he had been deceived by a distant shining rivulet, which he had mistaken for the road, and being unable to regain the track, as well as bewildered among the intricacies of the mountain as twilight came on, he had wandered to and fro in confusion and uncertainty, till overcome by cold and exhaustion; and it is probable he would have perished, but for the circumstance I have mentioned. As it was, serious illness ensued, and he was confined to his room at Llanberis for above a fortnight.

At length I stood on Snowdon. Dull, and dark, and cold, the clouds hung about its subject heights, and obscured three parts of the landscape, and its lakes slumbered in their deep hollows like misty mirrors—two or three. however, putting on a beautiful sea-green tint. Twenty-five glitter amidst hollow glens and ragged crags on a very clear day, but I could now make out only twenty. The lakes of Llanberis, the vale to the Menai, and the whole island of Anglesea presented a glorious spectacle, and towards Beddgelert, *Lyns Dinas* and *Gwinedd* were beauty spots of no mean interest, as well as the little pools called *Llyn Llwydaw* and *Llyn y Cwm Glâs*, beneath the horrid pointed crags of *Clogwyn y Garnedd*; but towards Capel Curig a dense mist brooded over the low

country, from whose head quarters, advanced squadrons occasionally pushed on, and dark amidst the fleecy masses that mantled their shoulders, rose the gigantic heads of Carnedd Llewellyn, Moel Siabod, and the Glyder Vawr, as if contending for pre-eminency with Snowdon himself. On *Yr Wyddfa*, the highest point of Snowdon, the trigonometrical surveyors have reared a permanent stony cairn or mount, surmounted by a pole, which has already received the indentations of almost every letter of the alphabet, repeated as reporters sometimes tell of toasts at public dinners, *nine times nine*!—so inveterate is the habit of Englishmen to leave a memento of their track behind them—so tempting is it to have one's name elevated above the clouds, and literally held aloft by Snowdon for the admiration of succeeding generations! Fortunately the beacon post is stout and strong enough to bear the hacks of many a host of invading carvers, but it is to be lamented, that unless they climb higher and higher, there will soon be a deficiency of "room and verge enough" for these barbic operations; so that it may be advisable for future adventurers to change the scene, and seek to carve out immortality in the classic waters of "old Conway's roaring flood." I found a party of gentlemen had just preceded me, to the proud *Wyddfa*, and as no one ever thinks of mounting Snowdon without a pocket pistol about him, we now prepared to fire, and simultaneously cheered to the health of our fair youthful Queen, from the highest point in England and Wales.—Let no teetotaller venture to mount Snowdon with presumptuous foot, as he values the well-being of his outer

envelope, without a medical certificate first had and obtained, in his pocket, for a little *relaxation* from the rule of his order. At all events "*Lookers-out*" may be considered privileged persons, more especially when there are no "*Lookers-on* !"

Although experimentalists have often affirmed that the constituents of the atmosphere are precisely the same upon the loftiest mountains as in the closest cities, no one who has ever snuffed up

"The thin air upon the iced mountain tops,"

can assent to the effects of their *respiration* being the same. The freshness of the mountain air for ever kept in a state of purity by the blowing wind, is bracing and exhilarating in a high degree, and its Ithuriel penetrations seem to unmask the spirit, and draw forth its best aspirations, at the same time that the soul, lifted above terrene affairs, distinguishes that pulsation that throbs to nobler views than those of earth. —But "to our mountain sport." Around the summit of Snowdon grows the humble *Salix herbacea*, a species of willow, and the smallest tree known in the world, for a complete specimen of it, trunk, leaves, flowers, and fruit, might be concealed within the leaves of a thumb almanack! Immediately below *Yr Wyddfa* extend the series of awful crags denominated *Clogwyn-y-Garnedd*, some of them above 600 feet in perpendicular height. Here, amidst the clouds that perpetually saturate this fearful reef, most of the famed plants of Snowdonia grow, as mentioned by Ray, and other British botanists. Among the chasms of this ridge I began cautiously to slide; but the little

Welchman, with his tin box on his back, actually bounded like a roe, and soon brought me, from an almost inaccessible peak, some specimens of the rare *Serratula alpina*, or alpine Saw-wort. My own researches produced me the *Oxyria reniformis*, or Mountain Sorrel, Scurvy Grass (*Cochlearia officinalis*), Mountain Fescue Grass (*Festuca Vivipara*), the silky leaved *Cerastium alpinum*, Mountain Rue (*Thalictrum alpinum*), the beautiful Ferns—*Allosorus Crispus*, *Cistopteris fragilis et dentata*, and *Asplenium viride*, as well as Alpine Clubmoss (*Lycopodium alpinum*), and the pretty prickly Clubmoss, *L. selaginoides*. *Arenaria verna* was also plentifully in flower, its silver blossoms shining elegantly amidst masses of dark rock. *Polygonum viviparum*, and many other alpine species might be referred to—but one expedition will not suffice to gather all, nor must the Botanist expect it.

Besides these, among the dripping cavities, many beautiful Mosses spread their deep green velvet cushions, studded with urnlike fruit, among the most elegant of which occurred *Polytrichum urnigerum et alpinum*, Strait-leaved Apple-Moss (*Bartramia ithyphylla*), so confervoid in its aspect, and the delicate curious Filmy Fern *Hymenophyllum Wilsoni*. In our way back to Llanberis we visited the terrific black precipice called *Clogwyn Du Yr Arddu*, at whose base lies the *green lake*, so called from the colour of its waters, impregnated by the ore of a neighbouring copper mine. Descending this precipice at its most assailable point, we got to its base, looking back, not without awe, upon cracked and yawning masses above, that seemed ready to take a downward plunge without much

notice. Here *Arabis hispida*, a plant noticed long ago by Ray, was still very abundant.

Crossing the stream that supplies the waterfall of Caunant Mawr, the head of Cwm Brwynog presented a singular scene of desolation, of some interest to a geologist. Here lay, in chaotic confusion, a ruin of nature's own formation—vast slabs and massive fragments piled upon each other, as if Pandemonium had been upturned from its foundations, and riven by the thunderbolts of vengeance and destruction. And what was especially remarkable, all these masses had been, in the lapse of time, so corroded by rains and tempests, as to present the singular appearance of broken fluted cyclopean columns, more the work of art than the accident of slow brumal and imbral action. Amidst the examination of this labyrinth of stones, the gloom of evening came rapidly on, and it was verging towards the witching hour of night before I was “at ease at mine inn.”

A TRUCE TO WANDERING.

SNOWDON's peak is lost in gloom ;—
Now how bright the lighten'd room
To the sharpen'd senses speaks
After hours 'midst cloudy peaks,
Where the wind at ev'ry turn
Blusters over bog and burn,
Humid crag, and precipice ;—
Rest we from such toilsome bliss.

Feast we now in castled halls
Safe away from foaming falls,
Ferny cliffs, and mossy peaks
Glowing in red sunset streaks ;

Tho' we rest from wand'ring, still
Their images return at will,
Like clouds along a stormy sky,
With pictures of sublimity.

A truce to wand'ring—yet we see
Snowdonia's wide immensity,
As resting, half the pleasure rises
Within the mind, and still surprises;
Cloudy crags and deep ravines,
Misty lakes, and mountain scenes,
To the memory fondly cling,
And still urge on to wandering!

Truce, ye tempters, while we rest
Within Dolbadran's castled crest,
Yet thinking on the flow'rs that rise
On Garnedd's black declivities,
While clouds the riven crags immerse,
And raving winds the clouds disperse;—
But now within Llanberis valley
Rest we till to-morrow's sally.

The morning sun again shall rouse
To scenes all meet for nature's vows,
To lakes within whose sanctity
O'ershadowing craggy mountains pry,
To roaring waterfalls, beside
Whose moistness ferns and mosses hide,
Diffusing golden brightness round,
And on to wild peaks vapour-bound.

These are our joys—smile ye that may,
Shrinking from Snowdon's vapours gray,
Clouds shall intrude upon *your* dream,
Life pour to you its troubled stream,
And rocks appear as dark as ours—
While we look out among the Flowers!
And purified in heart the while,
See bliss in every dark defile.

WILD FLOWERS OF OCTOBER,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XXIII.

EXCURSION TO THE BOTANIC GARDEN OF SNOWDONIA
—PLANTS OF THE RAVINES AND ROCKS—FEARFUL
LEDGE ABOVE LLYN IDWAL—A CONTEMPLATIVE
DAY ON THE SEA SHORE—AUTUMNAL MARITIME
PLANTS—SEA-SIDE SKETCH—SEARCH ON BREAN
DOWN FOR THE WHITE MOUNTAIN CISTUS.

———"I have known the herbs of the hills,
I seized their fair heads on high, as they waved by their secret streams."
Ossian's Temora, Book viii.

"Observe yon band pursue the sylvan stream :
Mounting among the cliffs, they pull the flower
Springing as soon as pulled, and marvelling, pry
Into its veins, and circulating blood,
And wondrous mimicry of higher life ;
Admire its colours, fragrance, gentle shape ;
And thence admire the God that made it so—
So simple, complex, and so beautiful." POLLOK.

As the "Botanic garden of Snowdonia" still remained to be visited, I started for it the succeeding morning, with my little Welchman, and a visitor at Dolbadran Castle, who volunteered to aid the expedition. We proceeded to the base of the Glyder Vawr, bearing up along the bed of a torrent that had made sad havoc with the entrails of the mountain. This

course proved exceedingly delightful, and was fraught with ever varying interest. The torrent *here* spent itself in threads of silver over precipitous ledges of rock, *there* almost entirely lost amidst vast disrupted masses, allowed its bed to be traversed with impunity; again gathering its waters to one head, with chafing roar, it bounded athwart the declivities impatient of delay, whirling its eddies in deep pools among the stones. Now silent, now furious, now a brook and anon a cataract, its vagaries gave a continual zest to the ascent, especially where in some places it fell into cavities whose perpendicular sides must be scaled;—or tumbled in a hundred channels, where its vocal waters, washing the smooth stones, rendered them too slippery to bear the leaper in his passage from channel to channel. Hence many a slip, many a plunge, mid-leg deep in the mountain stream, and many a boisterous laugh. By the side of this torrent various highly beautiful and delicate flowers were located, particularly the Yellow Welch Poppy (*Meconopsis Cambrica*), still in full flower, and that fairy gem with flowers of stainless lustre, the Grass of Parnassus (*Parnassia palustris*).

It would take up too much space to dilate upon all the cryptogamous vegetation that exhibited itself abundantly in this ravine, especially where bushes garnished the edges of the rock; but a species of *Rivularia** had an extremely curious aspect on the face of a steep rock down which the torrent fell—

* I am not quite certain if identical with *Rivularia calcarea* or *granulifera* of Hooker's British Flora. The spongy crust of my specimens was very stiff, though not absolutely stony; when dry of a greyish green, and not reviving again if immersed.

resembling a number of cricket balls strung together, and saturated with water like sponges. In a shadowy recess, on the side of this waterfall, I gathered a fine specimen of *Marchantia hemisphærica*, as well as the green Socket-Lichen (*Solorina saccata*), *Collema spongiosum* and *Peltidea venosa*, all in fine fruit. Approaching now towards the head of the *cwm* we had been following up so long, our course was barred, and we climbed up the rocky side turning towards the crest of the mountain, but leaving the wild watery ravines with some reluctance. The Melancholy Thistle (*Cnicus heterophyllus*), with its silver leaves, occurred under a rock about midway up the Glyder, and the ground about the summit was most beautifully verdant with the prostrate stems of the Mountain Juniper (*Juniperus nana*), which was profusely in fruit. We now descended to a little lake called Llyn y Cwn, into which my botanical guide waded to obtain *Lobelia dortmanna*, and the curious alpine water plants *Subularia aquatica* and *Isoetes lacustris*.

We next followed the stream issuing from the lake till it approached a black barrier of rocks, in whose front appeared a narrow fissure for the admission of the stream, and for it alone. Here it paused—murmured, curdled, foamed, and hurrying into the gulphs whose impending masses shadowed it on either side, it suddenly rushed on and flung itself shrieking into an obscurity the eye was unable to penetrate. This dark passage is the portal into the celebrated recess denominated *Twll Du*, literally the *black hole*, or vulgarly called “the Devil’s Kitchen.” Hitherto it had been a glorious autumnal day, but we were now

on the verge of Tartarus, and it was but natural to expect smoke and steam. They came on rapidly in the shape of a drivelling mist, which soon spread its wearisome sameness around, shrouding "the Devil's Kitchen," Lyn Cwn, and everything else in its reeking folds. This, for a season, obliged us to call a halt, and bivouac in the Satanic territory. Accordingly we sat down upon the loose blocks of stone that lay near the chasm before us, as if the Tartarean gates had been forced by an earthquake from their massive hinges and overthrown; and while waiting for the dispersion of the clouds about us, with appetites whetted by the mountain air, gladly called in requisition the not forgotten sandwiches and brandy-bottle, to reanimate our half exhausted limbs stiff with climbing. My little Welchman, however, kept jumping about among the crags with his tin box strapped to his back, to my admiration and almost terror, and soon exhibited to me the delicate Spider-wort (*Anthericum serotinum*), while I myself had plucked the *Statice armeria*, and soft-flowered Cat's-foot (*Gnaphalium dioicum*).

Turning down the bed of a streamlet among the slippery rocks, we began to descend towards Cwm Idwal, and here it is, where the torrent, I before mentioned, breaks through the barrier of *Twll Du*, amidst a debacle of ruin, that Flora, as if to counterbalance the horrors of the place, robes the sable rocks with some of her choicest favourites. Here the Snowdon Pink, as it is called, or Moss Campion (*Silene acaulis*), dashes a broad gleam of rosy light upon the rock with its numerous pink flowers; here in immense profu-

sion the silver flowers of the Saxifrages (*S. hypnoides*, *stellaris*, *et cæspitosa*), cover the face of the dripping precipices; here the fairy purple Saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*) abounds; the yellow Poppy blooms abundantly in the crevices, and the Rosewort (*Rhodiola rosea*) hangs its yellow cymes luxuriantly in spring far out of reach of the adventurous foot, or in autumn droops its flaccid leaves, rosy as the glowing hue of sunset.

In this favourite spot, some of the rarest Ferns reward the enterprise of the "Botanical Explorer." To find one, the *Aspidium Lonchitis*, as well as the almost eradicated *Woodsia*, I ventured up the front of the mural rock. Midway up, one spot made us pause. It was a part where a huge intervening mass blockaded the way, with no possible advance but by a narrow gutter on its face fit only for a chamois. One slip from that narrow gutter would have been worse than a tumble from the Tarpeian rock, for it was a perpendicular plunge of 250 feet, without a break! In the craterian hollow below lay Llyn Idwal, black and without a ripple on its surface, solemn and terrific to look upon; clouds rolled above, and clouds rolled below, between the lake and the precipice where we stood. At this point my nerves actually quailed at the prospect, and I felt I could move no farther. But my little guide soon gave me a recipe for my nervousness, occasioned by my looking *down* into the cloudy gulph beneath. "Look up," said he, "creep close to the rock, and there is no danger." I still hesitated, till measuring the distance with my eye, and at last forming my resolve, I *closed* my eyes on

the fearful view, *felt* my way with cautious steps, crossed the dreaded ledge in safety, and gathered my plant! After that all was lightsome to the summit of the cliff, and thence over the flank of the Glyder by Llyn Cwn, and down into the vale of Llanberis, to a glorious regale at the Dolbadran Castle.*

But to the "Botanical Explorator," as well as to every mind awake to the love of the bold and the beautiful, a contemplative day on the sea-shore, in the autumnal season, affords a mental banquet of the highest order; and, of necessity, the calm, delicious tranquility that pervades the mind, is not undivested of a dash of melancholy, from the feeling that the glories before the eye will soon be succeeded by the fierce uproar of the brumal tempest. As first impressions are always the most vivid, I will here extract a short account I penned some years ago of a passing visit to the pretty village of Budleigh Salterton, Devonshire, because here I passed my *first* solitary day in the contemplation of the restless ocean—a day that still rises in my mind a chrystal gem, amidst the dull, sad, and opaque *rejectamenta* of memory.

It was most lovely autumnal weather, with a kind of dreaminess upon surrounding nature. The day was not cloudy, and yet the sun did not shine forth in his fullest effulgence, but tempered his radiance with a thin gauzy veil, which occasionally admitted a brilliant gleam over the landscape, while ever and anon, though without a breeze, the yellow leaves of the elm fell eddying through the air. With renovated spirits

* The Inn of that name, which has every comfortable appliance a Botanical Explorator can desire, and not the ruined tower on the side of Llanberis lake.

I advanced on the road to Salterton, and beautiful were the prospects that occasionally presented themselves—Exmouth and the sea when I had mounted the hill beyond the town—a lovely expanse of woody country, with a bare, heathy, gravelly hill in front, near Salterton, and beech trees (oh, the beautiful beechen tree) in the richest diversity of gold and auburn. Salterton is a pleasantly situated village, close to a fine pebbly beach, expanding for about half a mile from a fine semi-circular sweep of red sandcliffs that stretch close up to the village on the right, to where the little river Otter (*Coleridge's* Otter) makes its *embouchure* into the sea on the left. An isolated mass also rises between, where the beautiful Sea Pink (*Statice armeria*) was displaying its rosy loveliness in great profusion. From the base of this cliff extends a fine beach composed of large pebbles, forming a noble mound or breakwater, at the base of which the calm sea was faintly gurgling; but what must be the clash of the 'proud waves' here in rough weather, when

———"settling on the sea the surges sweep,
Raise liquid mountains and disclose the deep;
South, east, and west, with mix'd confusion roar,
And roll the foaming billows to the shore." *

I proceeded slowly along the pebbly barrier, though with some difficulty, as the smooth stones were displaced, and rolled about at each footstep. On one side appeared a smooth shallow pool, where a flock of Sandpipers were sporting, and immediately in front rose a proud, lofty mass of red sandstone, the base of

* Dryden's *Virgil*.

which was washed by the Otter, which at this point rushed with a swift current over the pebbles into the sea, dividing into two branches, and forming a small pebbly island at the ebb. This island I contrived to reach by striding along the slippery stones, and occasionally flouncing in the water, and was amply repaid by the scene of desolation presented to my view. For some distance along the shore the rock had been shivered to pieces, and lay on the beach in vast broad slabs, presenting an awful geological spectacle. These masses of sandstone are evidently covered by the tide, which dashes violently against the cliffs, forming cavities and grotesque shapes, and the friable constituents of the sandstone thus mutilated by the waves, and acted upon in winter, probably by the frosts, and at all times by the atmosphere, necessarily causes huge masses of the rock deprived of support from below, or detached from above, to thunder down upon the beach, leaving a singular scene of ruin and desolation. These fragments are profusely covered with olive-green *fuci*, and form a favourite resting place for sea-birds. An old fisherman put me in his crazy boat from the island across the other branch of the Otter, and botanizing about the sandstone cliff, I found some fine specimens of *Arenaria marina* in full flower, and the beautiful Sea Lavender (*Statice limonium*) on the ledges of the rock. Here, too, were some most luxuriant plants of the *Iris fetidissima* in seed, which seems to delight in a maritime locality, and I have scarcely seen it more abundant than here and in the Isle of Wight. I now toiled to the summit of the cliffs, and sitting down at my ease, while

munching some biscuits, gazed delighted on the lovely expanse of ocean stretched before me. On the right, with a spread of pebbly beach between, was the pretty sequestered village of Salterton, beyond which a majestic range of red cliffs extended in a semi-circular direction far away, cliff beyond cliff receding in lengthened succession, till the far point of Berry Head, in Torbay, dimly met the view. Above Salterton was a lovely wooded inland landscape, bounded by hills and groves, and the blue outline of the heights of Dartmoor in the far distance. To the left, cliffs of a still sublimer character presented themselves, loftier and grander, massive, towering, and threatening ;—beyond which, in far perspective, the white cliffs and chalky ranges of the coast of Dorset glittered in the declining rays of the sun. But, in front, stretched that world of wonders in itself—the Ocean ! not, indeed, in its wild, awful, tempestuous character—but fair, smooth, and calm, as when it tempted the shepherd in the fable, to sell his flocks, equip the winged vessel, and traffic in merchandize. So fair, so beautiful it seemed, spreading in its loveliness to the verge of the horizon, while not a vagrant sail disturbed the solemn solitude ! At intervals, only, a Cormorant would wing along with spreading pinions close to the water, till his dark form was lost behind the intervening cliff. I approached close to the verge, but cautiously, and looked down ; it was too awful to venture the view again except on bended knee ;—the rock was friable, and the scene of ruin below told but too plainly what must be the inevitable result of a single slip. While gazing on the scene, a solitary Sand-Martin

(*Hirundo riparia*) sprung from a cavity in the rock, and fluttered in the sunbeams, resting every now and then upon a little shelf of the sandstone. Poor fellow! he was left behind when his parents and brethren took their departure over the mighty deep to warmer climes, and, like the domesticated pet of a deserted cottage, whose inmates have removed far away, he moved querulously about, as if astonished and confounded at the unwonted state of destitution in which he was thus left. In wandering on to a succeeding range of cliff, and looking down suddenly through a break upon the shore below, I perceived a large flock of Sea-Gulls seated, in all their white purity, upon a large fragment of sandstone; but they quickly started off, barking and howling like a pack of hounds, till the eye lost sight of them, as far off they flounced down upon the water,—but their singular bark or melancholy *low*, long resounded, at intervals, from the wide ocean, alone disturbing the awful, soothing, renovating silence of the scene.

In favourable, and, especially, sheltered maritime localities, many plants will continue in blossom to a very late period of the year; and hence the Botanical Explorator need never despair of improving a fine day even to the very verge of Christmas itself. As I shall speedily have to take leave of phanerogamous vegetation, I shall here record a visit I paid to the habitat of the rare *Helianthemum polifolium*, or white Mountain Rock-rose. I happened to be at Weston-super-mare, in Somersetshire, in the middle of November, 1841, after winter had set in somewhat fiercely; but a fine gleam of sunshine tempting me down to the beach, I

thought it possible that I should be able to find my way to Brean Down, and allured by the prospect, bent my way towards it, scarcely expecting, however, to find a specimen left of the plant in question, unless, perchance, in seed. I walked down to the beach, where all was silent and deserted—the tide was out, and the distant roar of ocean sounded but faintly on the ear. In front lay a wide expanse of wet sand; in mid distance the rocky promontory of Brean Down and the islands of the steep and flat Holmes; and beyond there lay a level sea, bright in the subdued light that thin yet dusky clouds permitted, that veiled the sun's orb from view. The scene was calm, fine, but dreamy, and with the leaden tints of twilight. Left of Brean Down a whole legion of descending rays burst from the clouds, partially intercepting the line of distant hills, but occasionally lighting up their sides. After a long walk upon the moist shining sands, I came to the verge of the little river Axe, which I found cut off my progress to the rocky peninsula, and as there was no bridge, I had to engage a boatman to row me down the river to the rock, and, of course, await my return. I was soon scrambling up a precipice of carboniferous limestone, of which the peninsula of Brean Down consists, running far out into the Severn sea, and on so strait a line with the Steep Holmes, that I should judge they were formerly connected, and, perhaps, disjoined by the dashing waves at a far distant period. A glorious view of Weston Bay, the expansive estuary of the Severn, and its guardian islets, burst upon my view from the summit of the promontory, which is covered with a fine

green turf,—invaded now, however, from its virgin state, by various small allotments let to cottagers for potatoes, &c. On the south side is an almost perpendicular precipice, and the peninsula, narrowing in places, subdivides itself into three portions. I now commenced my search along the southern ledge for the *Cistus*,* but, for some time, in vain; nor till arriving at the end of the first division of the down did I find a single plant, though quantities of the *Iris fœtidissima*, with open capsules appeared, displaying a rich array of orange-coloured seeds. At last a single scrubby withered *Cistus* appeared on the cliff, and thus assured I was on the right scent, I pressed on—more appeared, yet, still, all withered. But as I entered upon the second portion of the promontory, where the rock forms a fine slope towards a little bay below, I was rejoiced to notice numerous plants quite green and flourishing;—then I saw some with perfect fruit; and, beyond all hope, a beauteous group lay on the hill side, still bending with unexpanded white petals, tipped with rose. It was a lovely sight, and one I may, probably, never behold again, since, except at Babbicombe rocks, in Devonshire, this rare and beautiful flower is found no where else in Britain, and, according to Sir James Smith, in the world! I seized my prize, I fear, with a rapacity worthy of “gloomy Dis” himself, when he carried off the “fairer flower” of Sicily; but, for the satisfaction of my brother botanists, I beg to say, I left a store of plants behind for the stock of another season, and many had evidently spread their seeds around long before my arrival.

* *Cistus* of Linnæus, *Hellanthemum* of De Caudolle.

Many a delightful capture of this kind has it been my lot to obtain, though, frequently, from weather or accident, proving "a fearful joy;" nor, on the present occasion, did I entirely escape unscathed. I had lingered so long upon the rocky promontory, wandering to its remotest end, that the shades of evening had gathered round, and I began to fear for the fidelity of my boatman, for by this time the tide had set in, and so filled the little estuary of the Axe, that it appeared like a broad lake. For some time, when I got to my starting place, I could see nothing but a boat got loose from its moorings, which, imagining to be mine, I began to calculate upon a long round-about toilsome pilgrimage back to my quarters; but, after some loud shouting, Charon, fortunately appeared, having removed his boat farther up the stream, and picked up an auxiliary in the shape of a Westonian, who begged a passage in the boat. So away we scudded with the tide, nor with that alone behind us, for in its wake a driving rain burst upon our devoted heads. It was now dark, wind and rain rendered obscurity doubly obscure, and I should certainly have got into some misadventure, had not the Westonian, whom I had accommodated with a passage, offered the aid of his local knowledge to guide me over the sands. Amidst the dashing of waves, and the beating of rain, I at last arrived, wet and weary, in view of the glimmering lights of the town, just as the moon, dim and hazy, as seen through the watery vapours, faintly appeared in the brightening east.

WILD FLOWERS OF OCTOBER,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XXIV.

A LOOK OUT UPON THE SERE AND YELLOW LEAF—
REFLECTIONS ON A FOGGY MORNING—COLOURS
ASSUMED BY THE FOLIAGE OF FOREST TREES—
CHEMICAL SUGGESTIONS ON THIS PHENOMENON—
MOURNFUL ASPECT OF NATURE—SUPERSTITIONS
APPERTAINING TO GROVES AND TREES—LAST GLANCE
AT FLORAL BEAUTY—IVY, ARBUTUS, &c.—FARE-
WELL TO SUMMER.

“Now shift the scene to moonlight glade,
Where dapper elves beneath the shade
Of oak or elm, their revels keep,
What time we plodding mortals sleep.
Next, lead me to some haunted grove,
Such as the Fauns and Dryads love ;
Or seat me by some brook, whose swell
Makes music like a Naiad's shell :
Then touch the tree 'neath which I lie,
Till it uncloseth to ear and eye
Whate'er it may have heard or seen
Since Spring first cloth'd its stems with green.”

Spirit of the Woods.

We are now literally touched by the “sere and yellow leaf,” vegetation is every where fading around us, and the woods of October stand arrayed in unwonted yet melancholy splendour. The mind contemplates this brilliant “pomp of woods” with feelings

akin to those that would arise at the sight of a well appointed army glittering with gay uniforms, feathers, and standards—just advancing to their final debouche upon the field of battle. So this gorgeous array of shrubbery, grove, and forest, is the last glory of the waning year—the breath of winter has already touched the foliage with talismanic power, and the transcient colours that on every side now gild the landscape, are the only deceptive tranquil prelude to the desolation that sternly stalks behind. But though the prescient philosopher ever predicating results from apparent phenomena, troubles himself with the coming events whose precursing shadow he espies, there is no necessity for a “Botanical Explorator,” to be in advance of the season, and thus be overwhelmed in the whirlwinds and storms of Winter before they arise; sufficient to him to seize the day as it actually exhibits itself, and depict the beauties of nature as they appear—all smiles—in the balmy transient hours that beam like sunset clouds in the too short intervals of autumnal pourings. For, alas, “Amalthea’s horn,” once honoured as the horn of plenty, now too often pours upon the meads and orchards pluvial treasures, upon which the eye gazes mournfully as they fall, and the wandering foot seeks in vain for a dry spot on which to stand and muse.

Rain! rain! rain!—the falling deluge echoed throughout the day in the shrubbery; it pattered upon the leaves, and sounded mournfully, mixed with the owl’s “*too-whoo*,” as I raised my head from my pillow dubiously amidst the gloom of midnight. But look out upon the still morning! All is hushed as if by

the touch of an enchanter's wand; the scowling tempest has exhausted itself—the wayward wailing child is cradled to rest. Yet hush! for a sound may awaken it again to increased squalling and commotion—let us then enjoy the momentary respite. A reeking fog now rests its grey folds in dull sameness over the vast surface of silent nature. It conceals (as a moralist might say) beneath that damp but opaque curtain, crimes never to be revealed in this world; cares, sighs, anguish, that are *well* concealed—for they would be known in vain to the heartless throng—what strugglings, what throbs, mental and bodily, what hopes, what aspirations, are not hid beneath that sea of vapour! But all must go on—for, as Miss Edgeworth says, “amidst the most interesting scenes dinner comes on the table as usual,”—so moralizing is useless, the fog rises in mid air, the rooks vociferate in cawing chorus as they journey through it to breakfast;—it invests the solemn depth of parti-coloured woods as it stalks gloomily along, then encamps along some ledge of limestone heights finely relieved upon a sky of cloudless azure, and at last is lost by rapid movements through a rocky pass beyond which its misty squadrons drive away from view.

The fall of the leaf, the different hues assumed by the foliage of various trees, and the order in which they are disrobed, is a subject of curious observation, and it may not be uninteresting to pay some attention thereto, especially as at this period the *Flora conspicua* pauses in its career—the garden has scarcely any new glories to produce, and although a few impatient plants hastily and foolishly make an effort to

antedate the spring like some young misses "coming out" too soon—it is but a few that make an effort to effect this onward movement.* Our contemplations then, are now directed to the wild interior of the forest glade, seated on some rustic seat, as the sun pours his glories from an unclouded sky, and lights up the silent tranquil noon of October with reflected light that burns upon the withering foliage as if with pyrotechnic fire—and all is still; the frolicsome squirrel sits with curled-up tail upon the oaken bough, the hare crouches moveless in her bracken form, and amidst the reeds and tall bulrushes, the black coot dreams on the mirrored pond, on whose glazed surface not a circlet stirs. Now mark we the varied hues that glow around us. In the following list I have

* Scarcely an autumn passes, however, without an attentive observer perceiving some tree or shrub, which has put forth a *second* crop of flowers, from which of course fruit would arise, if "a killing frost" did not arrest their progress. Even wild flowers are often prolific in this way, as if capriciously throwing their beauties into "old Hiem's lap;" but these anomalies may be oftener noticed in cultivated plants. From such sportive freaks of nature, permanent varieties have arisen, endowed with the properties of their progenitor, and I should account in this way for the "Holy Thorn" of Glastonbury, Caldenham Oak, in the New Forest, and other famous *prodromic* exhibitors of flowers or foliage, of course enlisted into the legendary credulity of the day. A superstitious relic of this kind now exists in a garden close to the west end of the cathedral at Gloucester, in the shape of an Apple tree, commonly called by the inhabitants of the fair city "*the forbidden fruit*!"—very probably a legacy from the monks of the former abbey. The fruit of this tree is never gathered, nor does it fall off like the generality of apple trees, remaining till after the flowering of the following year, so that flowers and fruit appear on the tree together, as I can witness. The superstition respecting the tree is, that it is the offspring of Eve's too celebrated apple, and that death or some direful calamity would inevitably befall the daring individual that plucked this "forbidden fruit." It is certainly curious to see the fruit clustering upon the tree late in the spring, and to witness the respect in which it seems to be held, though its beauty is not very remarkable. Some fanciful monk, I should imagine, first noticed and nursed this odd variety of the apple.

enumerated the characteristic tints that usually mark the leaves of the trees named, before they drop off.

LIME.....	Pale orange.
MAPLE	Light yellow.
WILD CHERRY ..	Bright red.
POPLAR.....	Yellow, or Citron.
BIRCH	Straw colour.
ELM	Yellow and brown.
PEAR.....	Frequently vivid crimson.
HORSE-CHESNUT.	Orange and ferruginous.
DOG-WOOD.....	Sanguine, changing to vinaceous.
BEECH	Anburn to deep umber.
LARCH	Dull orange.
SPINDLE-TREE ..	Crimson lake.
WYTCHE HAZLE ..	Brownish yellow.
COMMON HAZLE .	Yellowish.
GUELDER ROSE ..	Deep red or pink.

But besides this, many denizens of the grove present such variable tints that no one in particular can be fixed upon as the general component of the foliage; thus the sovereign Oak either exhibits a changing vesture of light green and yellow, or holds his green cloak firmly below his bald antlered head long after the leaves of every other deciduous tree have fallen, finally putting on a sober russet hue, which remains till late in the spring. The "wannish gray" of the Willow is scarcely altered till just before the leaves drop, subsiding into a pallid primrose tint; and the Alder keeps its foliage green to the last. The Sycamore has been well described by Cowper as

———“Capricious in attire ;

Now green, now tawny, and, ere autumn yet

Has chang'd the woods, in *scarlet* honours bright.”

The Lime is almost always denuded the first, and the Ash follows—the first frost often bringing down its entire foliage at one fall, and hence its sensitiveness prevents the exhibition of those gorgeous hues borne by other trees, the leaves (either green or yellow) very often curling up as if scorched. At a later period, however, the “keys,” or seed-vessels of the ash, which remain till spring, give a characteristic aspect to the individuals that bear them. The autumnal splendour of every other tree fades before that of the beech, which continues the longest of all, and under particular circumstances is of the most brilliant description. This arises from its lucid leaves, which vary in hue from auburn to gold-colour and umber, reflecting back the level rays of the descending sun, and thus burning with pre-eminent lustre like a sudden illumination. Blazing characters irradiate the grove wherever the beech presents, in spectral pomp, its vivid outline ; and if a passing raincloud, shrouding for a moment the tree tops, bears upon its purple breast the glowing Iris, with one limb intermingled with the golden foliage, the splendid effect will long rest upon the memory of the spectator.

Several chemists have amused themselves in attempting to account for the colours produced in autumnal foliage, but no precise result of importance seems to have been arrived at. Berzelius having found a peculiar colouring matter in *red* fruits, suggests that this must be common to the fruit and

leaves, as trees with red fruit have also red leaves in autumn. This appears merely fanciful, for though certain trees with red fruit have also red leaves, all trees with red leaves have not red fruit, as may be readily observable in the horsechestnut and pear, the latter of which, though the fruit is mostly green, has often foliage of the most resplendent crimson or carmine. Again, the pallid yellow of the fading leaves of the Laurel has surely nothing to do with its black fruit; and the foliage of the vine assumes the same faint purple hue whether the fruit be black, purple, or green. Macaire Prinsep, after various experiments, came to the conclusion that the foliage in autumn ceased to evolve oxygen, which it usually does in the daytime when in a healthy state, but that it received that gas from the air, by which an acid was formed, tinging the foliage at first yellow, and then red. No doubt that when the action of cold destroys the vital functions of the leaf, it must of necessity cease to evolve oxygen, but being thus in fact *dead*, it can scarcely receive that vivifying agent within its structure; but, as after falling, we perceive the leaves stretched "dry and withered on the ground," in one uniform brown tint, perhaps the oxygen may act externally upon the epidermis to impart that hue to the disrobing frondage. But whatever may be the primary influence that affects the change of colour in the leaf, its *fall* is the mechanical effect of gravity upon a dead substance, now in fact isolated entirely from the vitality of the compound polypoid structure to which it is still attached. Thus in the stillest autumnal morn, when the woods curtained in vapour, seem to have

settled into a lethargic torpor, and the lightest thistle-down pants for flight in vain—as the first burst of sunlight streams through the reeking mist, scattering jewelled colours upon a myriad host of dewdrops and concentric studded webs, leaf after leaf drops eddying to the ground, this intermitting *pit-pat* alone ominously interrupting the profound silence that invests the forest glades.

—————“For now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mountain grove;
Oft startling such, as studious, walk below,
And slowly circles waving through the air.”*

The leaf-strewn walk is a peculiar feature of autumnal scenery, and though the effect of the fallen russet frondage is exceedingly pleasing to the eye, and the rustling sound of dropping foliage falls with lulling cadence upon the ear, yet an unaccountable melancholy insensibly takes possession of the mind as it contemplates the sensible image of withered hopes and high-born expectations—flattering, once, perhaps, as the green buds of April, now blighted and prostrate as the humid leaves that rest in sepulchral state beneath each skeleton tree. It may be, too, that grief is awakened at the remembrance of some for ever lost to us, who in these very shades exchanged their thoughts with ours, and trod where we shall never hear their voices again.

—————“The landscape is lovely no more,
I mourn—but ye wood-lands I mourn not for you,
For morn is returning your tints to restore,
Endued with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew.”

* Thomson.

“ Nor yet for the ravage of Winter I mourn,
 Kind nature the embryo blossom will save ;—
 But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn,
 Or when shall day dawn on the night of the grave ? ” *

Sombre as this train of reflection may seem, it accords with the phenomena of the dying year, for as in Spring every feeling is legitimately buoyant with mirth and joy, so in Autumn grief and melancholy must have their vent. Indeed, at all times, the deep shade of “ twilight groves,” whether immersed in the dreamy listlessness of noon, or considered as fairy haunts under the phantasmic splendours of a full moon, have ever nursed grave, romantic, and even superstitious feelings in the human breast. In the sacred groves of Gaul and Britain the mystic rites of Druidism were celebrated; among the polished Greeks and Romans every temple had its consecrated wood; and “ holy trees ” have been venerated in every age, and esteemed as oracular.† Indeed, a huge old tree, or a

* Beattie.

† The oaks of Dodona were especially honoured for their supposed prophetic powers, and are several times alluded to by Homer; hence Ovid says—

“ Quercus, oracula prima.”

Even *timber* from Dodonæan oaks retained the prescient gift. At last almost every tree was consecrated to some idol, or even itself worshipped. Tacitus says that the ancient Germans called trees by the *names of their gods*. Tree-adoration continued to a very late period even in Europe, for in Dalryell’s “ Superstitions of Scotland,” he quotes a MS. description of the Isle of Skye, in the Advocate’s Library at Edinburgh, where it is stated, that “ about two hundred years ago, there was, in the island, a sanctified lake surrounded by a fair wood, which *none presumes to cut*; and whoever ventured sacrilegiously to invade it, either sickened at the moment, or were visited afterwards by some signal inconvenience, even if sundering the smallest branch.” A recent traveller in Italy mentions the whole neighbourhood of Bolsena as “ covered with rotting trunks of trees,” the fact being that the Chesnut woods there are considered sacred by the people from their antiquity, and are *never cut*. “ The trees have ripened, and fallen, and rotted thus for centuries.”—Willis.

grove of trees anterior to all our recollections, seems in itself to inspire respect and reverence, while the adjuncts that encompass it—shade, gloom, solitude, and silence, all conspire to convert this incipient reverence into devotional awe. As Waller has pleasingly observed —

“ In such green palaces the first kings reign’d,
Slept in their shades, and angels entertain’d;
With such old counsellors they did advise,
And by frequenting sacred groves, grew wise.”

So Pliny states that “ groves were of old the temples of the gods, and after that simple but ancient custom, men at this day consecrate the fairest and goodliest trees to some deity or other; nor do we more adore our glittering shrines of gold and ivory, than *the groves* in which, with a profound and awful silence, we worship them.” Faunus, however, came to be considered the tutelary deity of woods, while each individual tree was considered to be the habitation of a Dryad, or sylvan nymph, who sometimes miraculously spoke, and generally indicated her displeasure if her habitation was invaded by the sacrilegious axe, though she had power to remove and change her dendroidal habitation. Evelyn, in his “*Sylva*,” published in 1706, in reference to this, remarks in his quaint humorous style, that “as to those nymphs, grieving to be dispossessed of their ancient habitations, the fall of a very aged oak, giving a crack like thunder, has been often heard at many miles distance: nor do I at any time hear the *groans*, without some emotion and pity!” The Arcadians went so far in their devotion to trees, that they professed to be actually descended from the

venerable oaks whose extent of boughs shadowed o'er their hills; so that it is hardly to be wondered at that more savage barbarians, awed by the altitude, strength, majesty, and apparent eternity of duration of their vast primeval trees, as well as witnesses of their utility, should ascribe to them supernatural and divine powers, and view their hoary mouldy trunks and tortuous mossy boughs from a distance with the chilly trembling of superstition. Besides the oracular powers ascribed to consecrated trees around the fanes of gods and goddesses, and the mystic responses of the *Dryades*, the foliage itself, especially that of the *Laurus* and *Agnus Castus*, when lain upon in the stillness of night, was thought to propitiate the presence of the deity, facilitate the shadowed exhibition of prophetic vision, and inspire the soul to pour out, in frantic furor, those Pythonic verses, supposed to be dictated by the indwelling deity.

“But now, alas! the woods
Have all forgotten the immortal voices—
Apollo, with blithe Pan, no more rejoices
In viny solitudes;
And poets only hear, amid the trees,
Glad birds and wandering bees.”

Like the foam that awakened into existence by the frantic leap of the mountain-torrent, long remains whirling on the surface of the dark water, as if unable or unwilling to pass on with the under current, till a pause in the supply at once leaves it unrecruited to dissipate in air; so the products of idolatry and superstition have kept their holds, age after age, in the deep fastnesses of the woods, till the ignorance

that gave them birth, and the cunning that kept them up, failing any longer to sustain them, they have passed away from the scene, evanescent as the exhaling spray at the foot of the stilled waterfall.

Yet one more glance at the fading picture ere dying day robes in mist the mountains, and spreads her white vapours insensibly over the meadows and woods. In rural lanes how beautiful the ruddy fruit of the wild rose droops at the end of its long branches ; how rich the darker red of the haws ; how bright the pink capsules of the Spindle-tree, just opening to show the orange *arill* of the seed ; the splendid varied hues of green, orange, and scarlet, exhibited by the clustered berries of the twining Bryony (*Tamus communis*) forms itself a picture ; then, in contrast, Blackberries trail their sable clusters, tempting with their empurpling stains many a rustic finger—and there loaded with its erect black fruit is the Privet, on whose top a crimson-breasted Bullfinch has just settled for a passing regale. Last in the train of our native wild shrubs, the Ivy (*Hedera helix*) now exhibits on many a garden wall or neglected ruin, its sad inconspicuous and almost unnoticed flowers. They present no beauty in their aspect, yet are courted as a last resource by bees, flies, and many dipterous insects ; while it is providently ordered that the black berries that follow shall ripen in mid-winter and early spring, a supply for many birds, when hardly any other berries remain for them.

A final adieu to the garden ! few and far between are its beauties now, and even these tremble on the verge of destruction—*hold off, frosts !* still, however,

one or two hardy plants presents themselves, in particular the Michaelmas Daisy (*Aster Tradescanti*), whose tall purple flowers give some relief to the eye as it ranges round the vacant borders. This is a favourite rustic plant, introduced from North America, and though rather savouring of recollections of stubble geese in its rustic English name, commemorates, by its Latin John Tradescant, jun., a famous collector in the reign of Charles the 1st. Another glory of the garden and shrubbery, at this season, is the *Arbutus* or Strawberry-tree, celebrated for its connection with the lakes of Killarney and the monks of Mucruss, and deserving high admiration for the lovely spectacle it presents with its pale waxen bells, glowing crimson globose berries, and elegant evergreen foliage. Lyell mentions it as finely adorning the slumbering volcanic hill of Monte Nuovo, near Naples, which, like Vesuvius of old may one day again awake, and scatter the magnificent woody vest that now envelops it, in burning splinters through the air.

I must terminate the season of flowers with a votive wreath, that may, perhaps, not inappropriately chime over the obsequies of Summer, and if it tend to relieve the gloomy reflections I have felt compelled, by the dreary aspect of things, unwontedly to inflict upon the reader, I shall not in vain have penned this

FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

Farewell to the pleasures that Summer bestows,
Farewell to the Lily, the Pink, and the Rose ;
Farewell—for the forest has shook to the blast,
And the yellow leaves rustling, on all sides are cast.

Farewell to the summer's long walk in the grove,
To the nightingale's song, and the whisper of love ;
For November advances with desolate scowl,
And the forest resounds with the hoot of the owl.

Farewell !—but October's last evening invites,
Ere we yield to the dreary, cold, desolate nights,—
One walk in the moonbeams, one trip o'er the dell,
Ere we bid the last relics of Summer farewell !

One trip, while the moonlight beams mild on our head,
And the leaves a crisp carpet beneath us are spread ;
While the glow-worm still glistens, and flaming on high
The red star of *Taurus* illumines the sky.

Then adieu to the ramble along the wide plain,
To the evening's rich glow on the abbey's old fane,
To the overarch'd walks where we lengthen'd our stay
Till the last tinge of light died reluctant away.

Farewell to the groves and the gardens' delights—
Draw the curtains, and welcome the long winter nights ;
And if one friend remains to enliven our cell,
We can still with delight bid gay Summer farewell.

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR OCTOBER.

A pallid or umber covering of withered leaves may now be truly said to have invested and almost entirely hidden all traces of phanerogamous vegetation. Yet a few flowers struggle to the last, contending with stormy gusts and short days, so that the Botanist will not find all barren in his Explorations even now; and, indeed, a moist season frequently discloses some kinds of plants to greater perfection in the autumnal season than at any other time, while, under such circumstances, even vernal flowers will again renew their perishable beauties. No walk, then, need be made in vain, for late in this very month I have gathered *Chlora perfoliata*, *Gentiana amarella*, *Acinos vulgaris*, *Cnicus acaulis*, and *Campanula glomerata*, all in full flower, not to mention several species of *Mentha*, *Thymus*, and *Apargia*, that yet remain studding the meadows and copses in various spots. As every day exhibits sadly increasing numbers of denuded trees spreading their melancholy skeletonized forms against the clear blue sky, the Virgin's Bower (*Clematis vitalba*), wreathed around them in woody limestone spots, often to a considerable height, begins to show its plumy seeds very conspicuously, though their snowy featheriness is not fully attained till the following month. It is not yet too late even for the water-plants, for various families of these may be found in October, in fine flower or fruit, as several of the curious genus, *Chara*, which occur, entirely filling whole ponds; or if the season has been dry, and the level of ponds and streams is lower than usual, individuals of the genera *Potamogeton* and *Ceratophyllum* can be easily gathered and examined. But, in fact, new objects of attention occur on the very leaves themselves, withered as they are, and about to sink into total and irremediable decay.

Æcidii, *Reticulariæ*, and other minute *Fungi* fix upon them just before they fall, and stain them in a remarkable manner, while the lens discloses amidst what would be mere *mildew* to a common eye, numbers of minute spheres, of various colours, which, in some cases bursting, expose to view countless multitudes of still smaller globular *sphorules*, invisible but to the microscope, which are the reproductive particles from which future *acotyledoniæ* are to spring. Such are the minim wonders of Divine skill. Often on a dreamy autumnal day, when the misty wreath has rolled down from the hills and enveloped the level country in vapour, through which no sound vibrated upon the ear, has twilight surprised me upon woody heights covered with holly-trees and carpeted with long damp moss. Then, ere I descended, what a scene of grave tints and awful shadows has appeared beneath the western sky, where only a long line of deep ruby has rested, partly intercepted by one dark distant mountain peak. In the world of darkness below me, the trailing blue smoke was but just visible, and the yellow gorse and brown fern of the wild heath hardly discernible.

WILD FLOWERS OF NOVEMBER.

CHAP. XXV.

CRYPTOGAMIC VEGETATION, AND THE TRIBES COM-
POSING IT—ASPECT OF THE FUNGI—FAIRY RINGS—
BEAUTY OF THE AGARIC AND OTHER TRIBES—OF-
FICE OF THE FUNGI—NOTICE OF THE SMALLER
FAMILIES—NOMADIC AND METEORIC PHENOMENA—
RAPID GROWTH OF THE MUSHROOM, AND DERIVABLE
SIMILES.

“ When Flora’s lovelier tribes give place,
The mushroom’s scorn’d but curious race
Bestud the moist autumnal earth ;
A quick but perishable birth,
Inlaid with many a brilliant die
Of Nature’s high-wrought tapestry.”

BISHOP MANT.

WHERE shall we cull a garland for November, amidst wailing winds, scudding clouds, and driving leaves? Not surely in the garden, for *there* blight and desolation fill the flower border with disordered heaps, whirls of withered leaves rush about in disorganized files as the fitful gales impel them, the butterfly is no longer seen, and the hum of the bee has ceased to murmur forth the exciting sound of sunny hours. But there are still objects of attraction for the “ Botanical Explorer;” and leaving the poets to harp the dirge of fading flowers at their leisure, we shall

proceed to describe the particular vegetation we have in view—

“Beneath a spreading Mushroom’s fretted roof.”*

When Linnæus formed his celebrated Sexual System, he was compelled to include under the term CRYPTOGAMIA, a vast number of plants having no visible flowers, but which were assumed to have analogous organs to those of the PHANEROGAMIA, though altogether *concealed* from view. Modern botanists are not in general disposed to acquiesce in the idea of Linnæus, but regard the flowerless plants as altogether destitute of sexual organs, their reproduction taking place by means of *sporules*, which are enclosed in cases called *thecæ*, or imbedded in the substance of the plants, or else by a mere dissolution of the utricles of cellular tissue. These sporules, which are often exceedingly minute, have no embryo, like seeds, consequently their growth is not a development of parts already existing; but a vegetation appears which seems to be controlled in a considerable degree by the matrix to which the sporule has become attached; and it has been conjectured† that from the same common form of matter, a lichen, a fungus, or an alga, might be developed according to varied conditions of soil and atmosphere. It would be rash to accede to this view without the fullest proof, though, at all events, the sporules germinate at no fixed point, the mere accident of situation determining what part shall rise upwards and sink downwards.

The principal cryptogamic tribes are, the *Filices* or Ferns; the *Lycopodiaceæ* or Club-mosses; the *Musci*

* Dr. Darwin.

† See Lindley’s Botany, *in loc.*

or Mosses; the *Hepaticæ* or Liverworts; the *Fungi* or Mushrooms; the *Lichenes* or Lichens; and the *Algæ* or Seaweeds. The *Equisetaceæ* or Horsetails, formerly considered as cryptogamous, are now, according to Brogniart's observations, to be considered as allied in their fructification to the fir tribe; and Dr. Lindley, in locating them in juxta-position with the latter in his "Natural System," remarks, that "we must admit that Equisetaceæ are more like flowering plants than flowerless plants; and it seems to be most advisable to consider them a degeneration of Coniferæ, to which they have so much resemblance, rather than a race in affinity with Ferns, with which they have really no resemblance."

I purpose, in this chapter, to dwell only upon the curious and diversified structures denominated *Fungi*, which now meet the observant eye in almost every direction, but especially in the dark walks of the neglected shrubbery, the thick wood, the old fir grove, or even in open pastures, where they are often conspicuous at a considerable distance in the outline of those remarkable circles and segments commonly called "fairy rings," from an ancient superstition that they were caused by fairies dancing within these "green sour ringlets;" and hence Shakspeare makes a fairy say in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*—

"I serve the fairy queen

To dew her *orbs* upon the green;"—

as the fresh verdure of these rings was said to be occasioned by the fairies watering them. Titania also observes to Oberon in the same play—

—————"Dance in our *round*,

And see our moonlight revels."

It would thus appear that the beauty of the "fairy rings" consisted in their regularity of form and their delicate viridescence amidst the extent of browner pasture. To the observant eye of the Botanist, however, their beauty is greatest when their circumference sparkles in the morning dew with a polished girdle of Agarics, sprung up in the silent night, fresh and spotless as so many new laid eggs! Various species of Agarics occur on the edges of "fairy rings," though, perhaps, the brown gregarious *A. oreades* is most common, though making a less regular figure than others. A large Agaric, of savoury smell, which I have chosen to call the "Dryad's Cup" (*A. infundibuliformis*, Bull.), from its assuming the regular shape of a goblet, sometimes filled with crystal dew, often exclusively adorns rings in the vicinity of woods; while in open pastures the blue-stemmed Agaric (*A. glaucopus*), occasionally forms so closely shielded a satiny buff circle of pilei, that a snail might *circumslide* the ring without any interruption to his course. Continued rain, unfortunately, soon destroys the elegance of these evanescent fungoid orbs—for they are not the cause of the *permanent circles* remaining in the pastures, as these merely offer favourable *nidi* for the growth of the Agarics.

The beauty of colour and diversity of form of the race of fungi are very remarkable, and well repay attentive inspection. Some, as the *Amanita imperialis*, adorn the wood with caps of the richest scarlet on white stems; others, as the *Agaricus integer* spot the coppice with lake or crimson; or in the *A. violaceus* and *callochrous*, display the most beautiful hues of

purple and violet. Hilly pastures are very favourable to the growth of fungi, and I have often been delighted with the brilliant tints bespangling the turf upon the Malvern hills at this period of the year, from the splendid yellow and orange hues of the sportive *A. aurantius*, and the deep verdigrise hue of the stalk of *A. psittacinus*, intermixed with others of the most delicate ivory white, or dark and shaggy with brown hairs. A descent now into some deep sequestered wood offers a varied and charming spectacle soon as the foot treads upon the crimp brown foliage, and the eye peers about among the shadowed nooks still penetrable with difficulty. Here, pillowed on a twig, like a humming-bird's nest with eggs, appears the brown *Nidularia*—half immersed in black mould a family of crimson *Pezizæ* meet the eye—the curious *Hydnum* rises, its under surface all prickles—*Auriculariæ*,* in banden masses of dark plush or velvet, circle every old stump—and the ground is strewn with coralloid masses of *Clovariæ*, white, purple, or yellow. In short, every heap of decaying wood, leaves, or other organized matter, will be found teeming with these vegetable vultures, whose office it seems to take possession of, if not to resuscitate the molecules of dead or dying substances; and thus by a continuance of the vital functions keep on that healthy action between themselves and the surrounding atmosphere, which, without their aid, would become contaminated by the constantly increasing masses of putrescence. Thus, the scents diffused by the fungi are almost invariably of a grateful description, at least before in *their* turn they decay;

* Or *Thelophora*, of recent cryptogamic writers.

and in effecting this compensating object, the efficient contriver of their economy has caused them to appear in the most singular forms, such as cups, urns, bowls, globes, &c., and of every tint and colour (though blues and greens are rare), as if to deck even decay and ruin with beauty, nor leave a single deformity to repress curiosity, or still the voice of instruction.

Various arrangements of the fungoid tribes have been proposed by botanists, of which the most celebrated in modern times is that proposed by Fries, who divides the whole order into four cohorts;* but, unfortunately, the names he employs are as indigestible as the substances treated of, and would probably only annoy the observer who had not a life to devote to the subject, or ample time for minute attention to microscopical examination. As they meet the eye of a "looker-out," we may consider them as *casual* or uncertain, and *fixed* or constant. The latter are so identified with the living or dead organic substance on which they are founded, that like the vulture on Prometheus they ever remain to feast upon their prey, while its juices supply them with sustenance. They may be considered as annual or perennial, according as they develop themselves upon the foliage of plants under the names of mould, blight, mildew, &c., or as dry-rot expand in leathery masses among the fibres of decaying timber, or appear upon hollow or diseased trees in the shape of *Boleti*, *Polypori*, or

* Professor Burnett observes, that though "Mycologists greatly differ in their arrangements, they all, more or less, agree with the popular distribution into *Blights*, *Puff-Balls*, and *Mushrooms*."—Burnett's Botany, p. 177.

Dædaleæ, as large flabelliform tiled masses, increasing in bulk year after year.

The smaller annual fungi, especially the *Æcidii*, often dot the leaves of plants with orange and brown spots in a very pretty manner, and with a lens put on the appearance of a multitude of minute cheese cakes! The *Æcidium* of the common Dock, which is pure white, is peculiarly elegant, and furnishes an instance of the extreme beauty often perceptible in the very minutest objects. The genus *Trichia* contains several curious species, all found growing upon rotten wood. The yellow-seeded *Trichia* (*T. chrysosperma*, Dec.), may be often found in coppices during the autumn, occupying the interstices of decaying stumps, with its clustered yellow *peridii*, which resemble the small cocoons of insects. These bursting display masses of gold-coloured wool, enclosing the numerous minute sporidia. Persons residing in the country, with leisure at their command, need never want employment in examining the smaller tribes of fungi at this season of the year, nor need they go far to find them—every copse, hedge, and broken stick, teeming with them, especially the diversified and numerous tribe of the *Sphæriæ*, which are nearly all attached to bark in a rotten state, or decorticated wood, in this respect differing from the *Lichens*, which are confined mostly to living bark. No less than 201 species of *Sphæria* are enumerated in Hooker's British Flora; one of the most obvious being the round black *S. concentrica*, so often seen upon dying or dead Ash trees. Almost every plant, not to say nearly every leaf, indeed, nourishes some kind of epiphillous fungus, such as the

Puccinnia or *Uredo*, conspicuous as a red or yellow eruption upon the upper or under sides of leaves, and they are so numerous and common that it has been suggested by some botanists that their appearance can only be accounted for by the supposition that they are "anamorphoses" of the cellular tissue of plants.* Undoubtedly the minute sporidiæ must be carried up into the system by the circulation of the sap, and imbibed from the moisture amidst which they were disseminated.

The great mass of *casual* fungi are well known by the common names of mushroom and frogstool, and their appearance seems to depend, in a great degree, upon meteoric causes. Hence in wet weather various species of orange, brown, or green *Tremellinæ*, appear suddenly on the ground or branches of trees, as if fallen from the sky; while in seasons of great drought the edible mushroom is scarcely procurable, and *ketchup* becomes dear. On this account Linnæus called the fungi *nomades* or wanderers, from the curious fact that their vagrant tribes may appear in a place in the utmost profusion in one season, and then be altogether absent for a number of years, or even never return again—either lying dormant in the soil till the meteorological circumstances under which they appeared again arise, or else their viewless spores rising in the atmosphere and borne by the winds to far distant countries, may there hurried downwards by rain, once more spot the green earth. In corroboration of this latter view, out of fifty-six species of fungi gathered by Bertero in the distant island of Juan

* See Hooker's *Brit. Flor.*, Vol. II., Part 2., by Berkeley, p. 326.

Fernandez, two-thirds were found to be referable to well known European species. With respect to the former, I well remember gathering, many years ago, the splendid crimson-red *Agaricus rutilans*, in a particular fir grove near Worcester; but though I have since hunted the spot over year after year with the nicest search, I could never detect its golden gills there again. So in the spring of 1841, I found, to my surprise, the rare and curious long-stemmed Morell (*Morchella semilibera*), in several spots near Tewkesbury, and actually in the orchard close to my own entrance-gate, although I had never previously met with it in my life—another year it may not be found. In this tribe, then, in particular, the collecting botanist should act upon the principle of “*carpe diem*”—or the opportunity may be lost for ever of minutely inspecting these fugaceous structures—

“ Whose tapering stems, robust or light,
Like columns catch the searching sight;
Like fair umbrellas, furl'd or spread
Display their many-colour'd head,
Grey, purple, yellow, white, or brown,
A Grecian shield, or prelate's crown,
Like freedom's cap or friar's cowl,
Or China's bright inverted bowl.”

Some of the *Pezizas* are exquisitely lovely, especially the crimson coloured; and I lately had in my garden a gregarious species on a piece of wood, resembling an air bubble encircled with a ring of the minutest pearl beads. Others are like minute Roman urns, shells, or saucers; a few are even globular and wax-like. The “Jew's-ear” (*Exidia Auricula-Judæ*), is a

singular brown flabby species, occurring on old elder-trees, and so called from its plaited surface frequently exhibiting the form and depressions incident to the human ear. Paste and froth are simulated by some fungi; and mildews, moulds, &c., are only other forms of this singular omnipresent and versatile parasitical vegetation.

Several of the Fungi have subterranean habitats, as the *Sclerodermata*, and the curious Truffle, which usually grows beneath the shade of Beech trees, whence it is scented out by dogs trained for that purpose. Nees von Essenbeck mentions a poor crippled German boy who could detect truffles in the earth with a certainty superior to the best dogs, and so earned a livelihood.

It seems to be the allotted office of the Fungi to disperse organic matter into the smallest possible particles, and with the view to their dissemination, several tribes have mechanical contrivances not unworthy of attention. Every body is familiar with the puff-ball, or "devils' snuff-box," whose subtle powder pervades the air at the slightest touch, though few, perhaps, consider the millions of sporules they thus playfully set at liberty, will, in due time, develop other structures, as large as the parent plant from whence they arose, although now seemingly dissipated and lost in air.*

* The Rev. J. M. Berkeley observes in the second vol. of Hooker's British Flora, that—"In saying that these bodies are analogous to seeds and embryos, some little latitude must be allowed, as the mode of reproduction in perfect plants and *Fungi* is so different: it having been ascertained that multitudes of *sporidia* conspire to produce an individual fungus." It seems mercifully ordained that meteoric contingencies are required for the production of these tribes, which prevents their plentiful recurrence, except at uncertain intervals; otherwise they would become

Many of the *Trichias* put forth a glossy coloured wool, which is in like manner acted upon by the wind; and the congregated *Spherobolus stellatus*, after the manner of a mortar, shoots forth a small globular sporangium or seed vessel, which rises to some height in the air. As Bulliard mentions Puff-balls of the enormous size of *nine feet* in circumference, and some of the tropical fungi it is said have been mistaken for *sleeping lions*;* they seem to furnish a picture analogous to Milton's spirits, that in their spacious hall—

“Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given,
Behold a wonder; they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs.”

So under circumstances of brooding moisture, the fungi in the autumnal season put forth their deceptive strength, till grove, field, and hill, swarm with their multitudes; but sudden as is their appearance, their short duration is as surprising; and the largest dropping into liquidity or rising as dust in the air, soon “reduce to smallest forms” their monstrous shapes.

Much has been written on the edible qualities of the fungi; but except as sauces, catchups, or pickled, they are best avoided, for even the genuine mushroom disagrees with some persons, and all too often swarm with the larvæ of insects soon after they are gathered. Schwægrichen, indeed, a German botanist, is reported

the locusts of phanerogamic vegetation, and deform and destroy every other plant by their insidious attacks; for such is their fertility, that in a *single individual* of the species forming the smut in corn, (which is only noticeable in legions,) Professor Fries calculated there was *ten millions* of sporules.

* See Professor Burnett's *Outlines of Fungologia*, in his *Botany*.

to have lived for weeks on raw fungi, bread, and water, with "rather an increase to his strength;" and such a diet might, therefore, probably meet favour with the lovers of "total abstinence" in the present day. On the other hand many fungi are most virulent poisons, and no certain antidote is known against their deleterious properties. Toads were formerly supposed to have communicated this poison to the fungi, and hence the name of Toadstool. On the whole this beauteous tribe are but the attendants of damp and corruption, and as direful diseases have arisen from the use of food infected by them, they seem to symbolize that golden fruit described by Milton as presented before the longing metamorphosed fiends of Pandemonium, which glittered before their eyes, but became nauseous bitter ashes when they attempted to partake of it.

When the atmosphere is favourable for the production of some of the fungoid tribes, the celerity of their growth, and the strength they put forth in their emergence, is most astonishing in plants of such tender construction. A good-sized Mushroom, if accidentally located beneath a flag pavement, has power to force up a paving stone of the usual size, an inch or more above its level; and this was actually remarked in one of the most crowded thoroughfares of Cheltenham, in the autumn of 1840. Professor Burnet records a similar fact as having occurred in 1830, in the town of Basingstoke, where two Mushrooms elevated a large paving-stone, weighing eighty-three pounds, an inch and a half out of its bed; and other stones getting deranged in a similar way, much alarm

was given to the pavement contractor, who had but recently finished his work—"for it seemed doubtful whether the whole town of Basingstoke might not want re-paving during the term of his contract."* This energetic evolution is shewn still more remarkably in other fungi, as the *Phallus*, which bursts its volva, and rears its singular stipiform columella six or eight inches in two or three hours; while the large *Bovista* or Puff-ball has been stated to distend itself at the rate of a million of cells per second!

The rapid growth of the Mushroom has often suggested the satirical application of the term to those who may have sprung up suddenly into notice from obscurity, or who from some hiatus in their genealogical scroll, may be unable to prove positively their descent from Noah! But this simile, in fact, hardly applies more to the mushroom than to any other annual plant. The sporule of the mushroom germinates, it is true, hidden from view; and though called a flowerless plant, it would be more correct to consider the pileus that elevates itself above the grass as *all flower*, the real stem being subterraneous, and this pileus, if not accidentally crushed, often endures much longer than the flowers of the garden, whose fugacious petals wither and die in an hour or a day. In support of this view some species of agarics have from ten to fifty pilei or "blossoms" rising from a single stem. If we proposed a simile at all, we might rather consider the agaric as symbolizing the fate of modest merit, having every energy rife for action, yet oppressed and obscured by unfavourable circumstances;

* Burnett's Botany, p. 239.

but the moment the concurrent opportunities coalesce, the irrepressible effort of genius presents itself, sudden indeed and unexpected as the meteoric plants we have been considering, that stud the fields and woods, unable to display their forms till the saturated atmosphere and reeking pasture gives that impulse to their latent powers, which the Great Former of all intended from the beginning.

WILD FLOWERS OF NOVEMBER,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XXVI.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LICHENS—THEIR ASPECT ON
ROCKS AND RUINS—EFFECT OF MOISTURE ON THEM,
AND THEIR GENERAL ECONOMY—CHARACTERISTIC
NOTICES OF THE DIFFERENT FAMILIES—EXCURSIONS
TO THE ROCKS WHERE THEY ABOUND.

“We came to the hall of the king where it rose in the midst of
rocks ; rocks, on whose dark sides were the marks of streams
of old. Broad oaks bend around with their *moss*.”—OSSIAN.

“This black den which rocks emboss,
Overgrown with eldest *moss*.”

GEORGE WITHER.

THE most unbotanical observer cannot but have noticed whenever he has passed a grove of ancient trees, or even a shrubbery of modern times, that many of the branches are grey, bearded, and overgrown with what, on a mere cursory glance, would appear to be *moss*, and so it has been denominated, not only by poets, as in the quotation of Ossian above, but even by the older botanists themselves, as may be seen by reference to old Gerard's description of the “*moss* of the oak,” in his well-known ponderous herbal. The grey and bearded aspect above alluded to, is caused by a tribe of plants denominated LICHENS, which hitherto have escaped our notice. But though a careless

observer may confound the moss and the lichen, the difference in their fructification, will, when pointed out, always abundantly distinguish them; and independently of this, curiously enough, the lichen is mostly grey or white, seldom green, while the moss is almost always green, and scarcely ever white, except in the *sphagnum*, or bog-moss. The designation of the tribe I am about to notice, is taken from the Greek word *leiken*, applied to scurfy substances, or signifying a wart, which the fructification of many of the lichens is thought to resemble, but it is rather similar to minute saucers. In botanical language these saucers are called *apothecia*, while the plants that bear them are said to have either a *thallus*, *crust*, or *frond*. With better taste the expressive English term *time-stains* has been bestowed upon the lichen tribe, from the coloured hues which time's unimagined touch bestows upon rocks, precipices, towers, and old structures of every description, by the aid of these humid, pulverulent, or filamentous structures.

Maritime rocks are often resplendent with orange, yellow, or burnt-sienna tints, from the various lichens that there luxuriate in the damp sea-air; walls are copiously blotched with large patches of white or brilliant yellow, from their constantly extending growth; and who has not in his rural ramble oft gazed curiously at the old, broken, crusted, ragged, and diversified tumble-down barn door, that in its disjointed feebleness

“ Like rock or stone it is o’ergrown
With *lichens* to the very top.”

The ruins of castles and abbeys are, in like manner, generally overspread with these coloured impressions

of the damp fingers of time ; and they are enumerated by Bernard Barton, in his lines on Leiston Abbey, Suffolk, among the vegetable tracery overspreading that edifice, though, as before adverted to, confounded with *mosses*, in thus apostrophizing the ruins :—

“The mantling ivy’s ever verdant wreath
 She gave thee as her livery to wear ;
 Thy wall-flowers, waving at the gentlest breath,
 And scattering perfume on the summer air,
 Wooing the bee to come and labour there ;
 The *clinging moss*, whose hue of sober grey,
 Makes beautiful what else were bleak and bare ;
 These she has given thee as a fit array,
 For thy declining pomp, and her delightful sway.”

Crabbe, who, from having studied botany in his younger days, when a village pill-compounder, has often enriched his compositions with agreeable floral gems, manifesting the acute eye with which he surveyed the face of nature, has thus alluded to the effect produced by the lichens in harmonizing to the eye of the painter, those bald roughnesses which so offend correct taste in most new buildings, while at the same time he very correctly alludes to their mode of growth :—

“Yon bold tower survey,
 Tall and entire, and venerably grey,
 For time has softened what was harsh when new,
 And now the stains are all of sober hue :
 The *living-stains* which Nature’s hand alone
 Profuse of life, pours forth upon the stone :
 For ever growing ; where the common eye
 Can but the bare and rocky bed descry ;

There science loves to trace her tribes minute,
The juiceless foliage and the tasteless fruit ;
There she perceives them round the surface creep,
And while they meet, their due distinction keep ;
Mix'd, but not blended ; each its name retains,
And these are Nature's ever-during stains."

While great part of the *fungi* are geodical, deriving their nutriment from the earth, though called into their transient existence by meteoric causes, the *lichens* may be considered as aërial, for though perennially fixed to the rocks on which they grow, and hence called by Linnæus *vernaculi*, or bond-slaves, yet in fact they derive all their nutriment from the air, and the more *that* is saturated with vapour, the more they flourish and extend themselves. Hence misty mountain tops, damp groves, and the vicinity of the sea, nourish more lichens than other places, and indeed it may be said that the lichen tribe only increase and extend themselves in wet weather. How often with mournful eye do we look up to the sombre skies which at this season of the year pour their dripping treasures with melancholy pattering upon the fallen leaves and denuded trees ; how often is the misty vapour that wreathes the mountain's brow, and involves the streams and woods in its monotonous mantle of grey, regarded with a muttering murmur, as it rolls nearer and nearer, and at last flaps its dewy fingers upon our window panes, while some martyr to the rheumatism vainly turning his stiff and aching shoulder, slowly staggers to his easy chair ! But, sad as this aspect of things may at first sight appear,

"When rain in torrents wood and vale deform,
And all is horror, hurricane, and storm,"

there are many things to answer by it in the economy of nature. and among these is the growth and spread of the lichens. As the rain descends, how these crustaceous plants, almost invisible before, extend themselves on every side, rioting in the moisture they drink up, and which they must enjoy while they can, for, like the Esquimaux Indians, they have often to endure long fasts, and when the sun in summer blazes sometimes for continuous weeks, they seem shrunk up, bleached, and utterly dead. Yet, a single shower awakens their dormant vitality; they prick up, and distend their *thalli*, and imbibe the "mountain dew" till they appear so fat and bloated as to be utterly unlike their former selves—"disguised in liquor," as used sometimes to be expressively said of the old race of jovial toppers, in these degenerate days, put to flight by the incessant assaults of the tee-totallers! The ciliated borrierian lichen (*Borrera ciliaris*,) that often abounds on old ash trees, or hawthorns, giving them in the dimness of morn or eve the aspect of an aged man, "wi' locks o' siller gray," so dilates and swells its fronds in rainy weather, and assumes such a lurid green colour, as to seem at first sight quite a different plant. I recollect, too, a species of the collemate, or gelatinous lichens, which I have many times observed in showery seasons on the walls of Aberystwith Castle, black, fat, and bloated, with brown prominent *scutellæ*; but in a few days after the rain had ceased, not a vestige could be discovered of it, even on the closest inspection. In like manner the stones of a court-yard, or steps of a door, appear in dry weather to be completely free from extraneous substances; but a fall of

rain is sure to disclose something green upon the stones, which, if carefully scraped off, and examined with a lens, exhibits the first rudimentary vegetation of the germinating powder of the lichens, which scattered in air, has fallen upon the stone, and is now called into existence by the teeming moisture to tinge and carpet the *humus* where it has been deposited. Thus the lichens, being adapted to form the first clothing of the naked, rugged, rock, have the simplest re-productive organs, or rather may be said to be analogous in their multiplication to some of the zoophytes; for not only do the apothecia contain sporules to disperse the plants, but the divided medullary layer of the thallus itself, is viviparous. In fact, among the lichens, the proliferous system seems to be carried out to its utmost extent, a wise provision in a tribe of such intermittent growth; for those "mealy warts," common on several lichens, and whose use has been disputed, are doubtless nothing more than thalliaceous expansions of the plants on which they occur, struggling to extend and multiply their species. It is instructive to mark any stony memorial, cross, pillar, or tower, and behold these apparently weak instruments of an Almighty Power, commencing the work of destruction on the monument that was to stand "in perpetual memory" of some proud action or vaunted hero—

———— "Who under the grey stone
So long has slept, that fickle fame
Has blotted from her scroll his name."*

First, the continued shower softens the surface of the stone, and forms a minute concavity on which the re-

* Scott.

productive particle of the lichen can rest. It grows and extends with every dash of moisture, spreading out into broad plates, like ulcerous crusts on the skin of animals ; it now corrodes and scoops out the stone into large cavities, like the still deepening water-furrow, down the brow of the rugged mountain, and these hollows become filled up in time with the old decayed particles of the crust of the lichen. Mosses are now able to effect a landing on the degraded rock, and as the old herbage of these die, fresh soil is created, till the fern and the flower in their turn appear, with a load of ivy and berry-bearing trees ; and then,

————— “ Drops the tower sublime
Of yesterday, which royally did wear
Its crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
Or the unimaginable touch of time.”†

It is remarkable that, although lichens are so sensible to a moist atmosphere or shower of rain, none grow submersed in water, and none produce apothecia in places deprived of light, though so attached to the mazy crevices of the rocks.

“ Braving the inclemencies of every climate and season,” says Professor Sprengel, “ Lichens are the never-failing companions of the travelling botanist ;” and so I have found them, and at a time when most other plants, except mosses and fungi, are in a dead or denuded state, their diversified hues and crowded apothecia, “ make glad the solitary place.”— In the crowded forest upon every tree, mystic characters ap-

† Wordsworth.

pear, like old Cufic, Persian, or Chinese inscriptions, from which, as Sir James Smith playfully remarks, a fairy alphabet might almost be formed—these are the curious *graphideæ*, so called from the resemblance of their apothecia to writing. *Opegrapha scripta* and *O. varia* are particularly remarkable in this respect, and *O. elegans*, which is rarer, displays its large grooved black characters upon the oaks of the forest, as if presenting some dark enigma for a lover of the Dryades to decypher. The young branches in plantations of oaks are often so covered with the *Opegrapha macularis*, as to seem as if purposely blackened with gunpowder, or stained from an explosion of the same “villainous” material.

Another family forming the genus *Calicium*, have stipitate fruit presenting to view a crop of fairy goblets, in some species rising from the brightest golden crust, which finely adorns the stateliest oaks of the grove. *Verrucaria* displays a great number of species on rocks, or the trunks of trees, distinguished by their bearing numerous black tubercles on the thallus. The *Leprariæ* are extremely common on old trees, and palings, which they stain so freely, that they might be called white, green, yellow, black, or sulphur washes. These consist entirely of minute granules, and are therefore the simplest form known of the lichen tribe.

The species of *Variolaria* are known at a distance from the large white circles they form on many trees, with numerous white pustules. *V. discoidea* and *V. faginea* are the most common. The latter may be always known from the intensely bitter taste of its spreading adnate thallus. The common *Urceolaria*

(*U. scruposa*), often covers sandstone rocks, old crosses in church-yards, towers, buttresses, &c. to a great extent with its hard, thick, grey, crustaceous thallus, scarcely differing in substance from the stone on which it grows, abundantly interspersed with minute rugged hollows, which are its immersed apothecia. Crabbe, probably had this species, with *U. calcarea*, *Verrucaria rupestris*, *Lecanora atra*, and other saxicolose lichens in view, when describing the appearance of his church tower overspread with

“The enduring foliage;—then we trace
 The freckled flower upon the flinty base;
 These all increase, till in unnotic'd years
 The stony tower as *grey with age* appears;
 With coats of vegetation thinly spread,
 Coat above coat, the living on the dead.”

Perhaps the most curious of these armadilloed lichens is the *Beomyces rufus*, whose granulated crust is at a little distance undistinguishable from the rock itself, over which it widely spreads, and it would therefore almost escape notice but for its singular apothecia, which, though hard, in summer, as the stone they are upon, present in shape and colour a striking similitude to minute mushrooms, or *agarici*. Of *Lecidea*, with its shield-like apothecia, Sir J. W. Hooker enumerates 68 species in his British Flora, and we may refer to two in exemplification of it. The *L. parasema*, or common black-shielded *Lecidea*, abundant on the bark of trees, and the pretty *L. ulmicola*, whose crowded orange-coloured shields have a most elegant aspect wherever they present themselves. The Map *Lecidea* (*L. geographica*), also merits notice as a very remark-

able denizen of granitic or trap rocks in mountainous and sub-alpine countries, where it spreads its bright yellow thallus in a very conspicuous manner, cracked with black lines that seem to represent the courses of rivers, and their hundred tributaries, while the black apothecia mark to the eye of fancy the position of towns or villages. On the slate rocks of Cumberland beautiful specimens may be easily detached, but in general it is not easy to unchain this vegetable Prometheus, unless, indeed, the explorator feels inclined to carry away rock and all from its high position ! The summits of the Malvern hills, in Worcestershire, pleasingly display the Map Lecidea in many places, and in the autumnal season, while exploring those romantic heights, the snow wreath or the fog has frequently surrounded me; or while the storm in its utmost artilliried fury has been sweeping over the plain below, some of those islet-like hills that dot the level country of this beauteous part of England, have shone forth splendid as meteors, wrapped in the radiance of the declining sun, unscathed by the hurricane around them, like men of purer mould elevated above the crimes and passions desolating and destroying inferior human nature.

Lecanora numbers thirty-two British species, among which *L. subfusca*, with its brown polished shields often beautifies the trunks of old ash trees; and *L. varia* of a pale olive green, and the yolk-of-egg *Lecanora* (*L. vitellina*), distinguished by its bright yellow colour, are not uncommon on old rails, gateposts, &c. *L. atra*, with its clustered black apothecia is a very common object on rocks, walls, and stones

in church yards; while the Crab's-eye *Lecanora* (*L. parella*), and the Cudbear (*L. tartarea*), abundantly adorn the rocks of our higher hills and dark heathy mountains. Hence their characteristic home is in stern alpine solitudes, for the Lichen tribe flourish at a loftier elevation than is attained by any other plants, as thus intimated by Darwin—

“Where frowning Snowdon bends his dizzy brow
O'er Conway, listening to the surge below;
Retiring *Lichen* climbs the topmost stone,
And drinks the aerial solitude alone.”

In the genus *Squamaria*, the yellow wall species (*S. murorum*), forming orbicular cracked and plaited thalli, may be referred to as a well-known example; and the grey tree lichen (*P. canescens*), abundant on most elm trees, among *Placodium*. There are thirty-one British species of *Parmelia*, among which are some of our finest foliaceous lichens. The sulphur *Parmelia* (*P. caperata*) grows very large, and is a conspicuous object on orchard trees, while *P. saxatilis* grows every where on trees, stones, rocks, and walls. *P. omphalodes* is also very abundant on rocks in exposed situations, especially in the vicinity of the sea, where it wholly covers extensive surfaces with its deep purple thalli. The vicinity of old ocean is very favourable to lichenic growth, for the humid fogs for ever arising from its surface even in summer, and sleeping among the twilight woody glens through which alpine rivulets steal to the roaring monarch's embrace, nourish the species that in more inland situations would vainly struggle for extension amidst the continued burning

heats of summer. Thus it has occurred to me to find more luxuriant specimens of Lichens on the rocks about Barmouth, North Wales, than I any where else remember to have seen. Here the beautiful *Parmelia levigata* covers the massy stones on the margin of the beach, profusely covered with large bright chesnut fructifications; *P. perlata* spreads to a great size upon the rocks above, accompanied by the pitchy-brown thallus of *P. Fahlunensis*, and the closely adnate lobes of the tanned sun-burnt *Parmelia* (*P. aquila*.) In the groves about *Tan-y-bwlch*, I also noticed that the trees were profusely adorned with the very beautiful orbicular Green *Parmelia* (*P. herbacea*), in exuberant fructification. Limestone rocks often display species almost peculiar to that kind of stone—as the tiled *Squamaria crassa*, and the leathery *Endocarpon miniatum*, so abundant on the rugged carboniferous limestone of the romantic cliffs of Cheddar.

The yellow wall *Parmelia* (*P. parietina*), is a species extremely common on walls and roofs, and no Lichen abounds more upon old thorns, which it often completely invests as it were with gloves, and when, as is frequently the case, a little bright pink tremelloid substance bestuds the bright orange of the *Parmelia*, the effect produced is very beautiful. The inflated *Parmelia* (*P. physodes*), is a very common denizen of rocks, old pales, &c., whose interstices it covers as it were with a profuse grey beard.

Among the members of the genus *Sticta*, the Lungwort (*S. pulmonaria*), is very remarkable, investing trees in sub-alpine countries with its large green fronds, curiously pitted and reticulated. The

pitted *S. scrobiculata* is also not uncommon among rocks, which it closely covers as with an extensive glaucous-hued cloak of many folds.

The genus *Collema* has thirty-three species, all of a skinny or gelatinous nature, of which the Bat's-wing Lichen (*C. nigrescens*), not uncommon on the damp trunks of trees, may be adduced as a specimen. These dark foliaceous and plaited substances are generally very obscure except in wet weather, and are, no doubt, often passed by the unobservant eye. They are, however, very curious, for, in fact, on the commencement of rainy weather they spring up from their unnoticed retreat like new creations. *Peltidea* almost always appears upon the ground on mountains and heaths, and is easily known from its size, lurid aspect above, white beneath, and its brown peltate apothecia, resembling finger nails. *P. venosa*, and *P. aphthosa* are very beautiful, but these only occur in mountainous districts.

Gyrophora and *Umbilicaria* have a very singular appearance, and might almost be mistaken for large flakes of soot, were it not for the central root by which they are fixed to the rocks where they grow. The *Cetrariæ* are northern or alpine plants, though the glaucous *Cetraria* often adorns heaths and stony places with its wide spreading glaucous-grey thalli, in spots where the white-rumped Wheatear is sure to be seen flitting about. *Roccella* is a maritime Lichen, which yields a most valuable dye.* *Borreria ciliaris et tenella*,

* Many of the crustaceous and foliaceous lichens might be used in dyeing processes, but the *Roccella* or Orsell, brought from the Canary Islands, is most valued, and has been most employed. The price of this in the market is now about £290 per ton, and at particular times it has risen to nearly £1000!

Evernia prunastri, *Ramalina farinacea*, and *Usnea plicata et florida*, either together or in separate divisions, form those hoary flakes, fringes, and pendent floccy masses, which in winter and early spring give such a spectral aspect to the branches of the trees they clothe; as if nature had robed them with a permanent hoar frost—

“There fibrous, floating in the air;
Here—hoary, curl'd, and light;
Like tresses fine of maiden's hair,
Or hermit's lock of white.”

To some of these Lichens, more particularly, perhaps, *Evernia prunastri*, the name “Death-Moss,” has been popularly applied, as denoting that the term of the tree's healthy endurance has arrived when these pallid locks, assimilating to the grey hairs of man, appear upon the bark—hence it is said, such timber should fall. *Ramalina scopulorum* often appears very copiously upon maritime rocks, to which its stiff glazed pendant thalli give a most remarkably grizzled aspect, visible from afar. The Ash Ramalina (*R. fraxinea*), often depends from old ash trees in fronds five or six inches long, these “hoary locks” giving a most picturesque aspect to the weather-beaten veterans, pitted and reticulated as they are, and covered with copious apothecia. The weather side of a range of paling is also often made a conspicuous greybeard by the farinaceous, stringy, and other Lichens. The broad-leaved Ramalina (*R. pollinaria*), when occurring in profusion, gives a similar tattered appearance to old elm trees and neglected or unused barn doors.

But there are other families of Lichens that principally affect the bare ground, moors, and heathy

mountains, which in the absence of other vegetation they cover with a white or brown crispy robe. Such is the celebrated Reindeer Lichen—

“The *wiry moss* that whitens all the hill,”*

whose intricate tufts adorn the lofty mountains of every part of the world, and which in the winter forms nearly the entire support of those herds of Reindeer that constitute the sole wealth of the Laplanders. No vegetable, Linnæus states, grows throughout Lapland in such abundance as this, especially in woods of scattered pines, where for very many miles together the surface of the sterile soil is covered with it as with snow. How beautifully on the maritime rocks of Pembrokehire this snow-white lichen contrasts with the rich golden lacinated thallus of *Borrera flavicans*, with which it grows intermixed; while the forked *Cladonia* and the coral-like *Isidium*, contribute to clothe the otherwise barren steeps, with a garb which even poetry would fail to imagine in the beauty and delicacy of tint and form that it presents.

“You are enthusiastic in your Lichens (*likings*),” said a fair punstress on one occasion to me, as on turning over part of my herbarium before some botanical friends, I was descanting on their variety of form and hue. And truly I may be so, for many glorious imaginings—many never-to-be-forgotten excursions do I owe to them. They have tempted me on bleak Plinlimmon, where I have gathered the silvery *Stereocaulon*; they have led me panting, yet enraptured, winding my course among maritime rocks all day till I was as brown as the sun-burnt *Parmelia* that

* Crabbe.

I scraped from the granite ridge; how oft have they lured me to gather the blistered *Umbilicaria*, the wiry "Rock Hair," or the pointed sad-coloured *Cornicularia*, on the syenite of Malvern, the sooty *Sticta* and fringed *Gyrophora* upon Snowdon, or the curious Socket *Solorina*, whose apothecia is buried in round pits sunk in the thallus, amid the water-swept ravines of the Glyder Vawr. Still I seem to see the horrid precipice of Craig-y-Deryn, near Tal-y-Llyn, all riven and blasted, with its tottering crags, pointed peaks, and broken ledges, stained with the ordure of the myriad screaming sea birds that haunt it, and with the bearded growth of centuries bristling its face, to which I pilgrimaged from Cadir Idris, not without emotion, and from whence I now see in my herbarium the pitted *Sticta* and the brown *Nephroma*, still ever as I gaze recalling the sensations with which I gathered them. Up that frightful cliff, remarked a man, as I turned to take my farewell of its awful form, two youths were climbing, as you may have been, but they were seeking bird's eggs. They were half way up its scarcely practicable ascent, when a thunder storm suddenly swept on, and shrouded them from view. Awed by the elemental conflict, they were unable to advance or retreat. Long they clung one above another to the precipice, but at last, blinded by lightning, one fell, and at once paid the forfeit of his life. As the storm abated, the other shrunk sadly from his high position, slowly retrograded, and escaped. I turned from Craig-y-Deryn, or the Cliff of Birds, with a sigh, and proceeded on my course among the mountains.

But it is among the wildness of such localities that nature ever delights to place her favorites, for the stormy blast that shakes the mountain, and the pouring rain that floods the valley, merely increase the facilities of their plants to grow, extend, and perform the economy for which they were designed. The mosses retain the falling water to ooze it forth in the dribbling chrystal drops of summer, and the Lichens spread profusely to form those tufts upon the uplands, which show their tips of crimson no where else.

“Ah me! what lovely tints are there!
Of olive green, and scarlet bright,
In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
Green, red, and pearly white;
And cups, the darlings of the eye,
So deep in their vermillion dye.”*

The objects thus pleasingly alluded to are the Cup-lichens, or *Scyphophori*, whose multifarious varieties, whether seen upon the sandy heath, the silent mountain waste, or upon the humble cottage pales, cannot fail to awaken in the Botanical Explorer, admiration, if not gratitude to that Power who has made all things beautiful, that solace may be found in his works to counterpoise the baleful effects of those passions that desecrate the moral world, and soothe those pangs that still ever accompany the struggles of man in the physical one.

The apostrophe of Linnæus, prefixed to the seventh plate of his celebrated “*Flora Lapponica*,” on a retrospect of the fatigues he had gone through among the wildernesses of Lapland, in collecting

* Wordsworth.

plants, is so appropriate an accompaniment to the scenes especially presented to the wandering Lichenist, that a paraphrase of it may not not be unacceptable—and it is at any rate in accordance with my own feelings and experience.

LINNÆUS' RETROSPECT OF HIS LAPLAND
JOURNEY.

How often to gather this wreath,
Have I thrill'd at the prospect beneath!
How often where dark rocks were scowling,
How often when thunder was growling,
Alone on the hills have I stood,
Amidst tempests that veil'd the dark wood;
Driving hail by the rolling clouds brought,
Has burst on my head while I fought!

How often to gather this wreath,
Have I thrill'd at the prospect beneath!
What rocks have I clamber'd upon,
Sliding cliffs where the footing was none;
Good God! * I still shudder to think
When I slipt on the precipice brink,
How thy goodness preserv'd as of yore,
How thy staff stood my footsteps before;
Just stay'd on the slippery ground,
Where the gulf hid in gloom, yawn'd deep, dark, and
profound.

How oft in the ruinous waste
Has the cold fog my temples embrac'd,
While still persevering,
Collecting and steering,
Tempest-beaten and burnt,
Nature's stores have I learnt,
When the wind mow'd the hills as it past,
And fainting and thirsting, I sunk 'neath the blast.

* "Quas angustias adii, bone Deus!"

Linn. in loc.

Yet I brav'd all these ills,
And observ'd the huge hills,
All ragged and gray
As they rose in my way ;
Vast stones bearded o'er
With the Lichens of yore ;
Wall'd-in glens in whose niches
The Fern its frond pitches,
Far up like the Eagle its nest,
And woods of deep horror sound breaks not of rest !

EXPLORATORY NOTICES FOR NOVEMBER.

WITH this month it would almost seem that botanical exploration *must* terminate, and of course it is so with *phanerogamous* vegetation, while rainy or foggy days often involve the whole country in a continual *drip*, that renders the forest shades no enviable place of meditation. Yet, there is no pause in the operations of nature, and when a fine day *does* occur, how exhilarating to climb the heathy hills, where the green Cup-mosses and silvery Rein deer Lichens are putting forth their scarlet or brown tubercles, while, perhaps, on some old weather-beaten stump a *Lecidea* appears in fine fructification, never observed before. From the Holly-trees, now showing their ruddy berries, and assuming an importance in the sylvan scene they did not before possess, hosts of Fieldfares flit as if thrown up casually into the air, while deeper within the wood is heard the harsh scream of the Jay. Below the eye the level country seems wrapt in a cold, dull, impenetrable mantle of fog, a calm but desolate sea of vapour; yet above this stratum the sunbeams light up the hill-side in radiance, and glance upon the green or brown Ferns, and, especially where, amidst the intricacies of the crisp bracken, some lonely autumnal flower—perhaps even the Harebell, lingers as if it hoped to pass scathless through the coming brumal rigours. As the tempest of every night now makes continual progress in clearing of its frondage any hesitating tree that had been permitted thus long to retain it, the landscape assumes new features in many directions, and often, indeed, discloses beauties to the eye, unobserved or unexpected while the cloak of summer leaves spread so thickly over the country. How often at this period have I been struck with the picturesque aspect of the old timbered farm-house of the true hospitable old English times, with its peaked gables, and wide, lofty, turret-like chimnies, now fully obvious among the leafless orchards around it, and often

accompanied by its sober, unvarying companion, the old enduring Yew, recalling a thousand recollections of old times—and then, along side of them extend, frequently, those abbey-like barns, whose timbered ribs and lofty doors are all thickly encrusted with the sacred cryptogamic crust of centuries. There is, alas, no beauty in the *modern brick* barns, and but few plants to be obtained from them. The denuded trees now exhibit palpable signs of the approaching season in the *Mistletoe*, with its white berries now prominently nestled in many of them, and the trees on which this curious parasite occurs, may now be more advantageously observed than at any other time. A stroll among the mossy labyrinths of the wood may conclude the explorations of the year. Here all is silent and mournful, the ground thickly covered with a soft yielding carpet of accumulated leaves, while the tall trunks of the forest trees wave with a thick crop of *Evernia prunastri* and the *ramalline*, and other frondose and filamentous lichens, like the deserted columns of a ruined temple ragged with weeds. Yet here, occasionally, the eye of research is rewarded by observing some rare and curious *fungus*, as the *Agaricus odoratus*, scenting the shade, the huge *Polyporus squamosus*, piled high upon each other, or the singular varnished grotesque *P. lucidus*, besides numerous more minute ones. But a pelting storm breaks in upon the studies and delights of the exploring botanist; and beneath some ivied oak, projecting brambly bank, or bower of wild feathery Clematis, he is forced to seek a temporary shelter as the howling storm vents its fury upon the darkened landscape. It breaks in pealing uproar upon the forest, and the lofty branches creak and groan around—the deluge falls in one continuous splash upon the soaked leaves—but lo, a break of light! a sudden impulse hurries the dark squadrons far on, and a brilliant iris starts up irradiant at the foot of the pleased shelterer.

WILD FLOWERS OF DECEMBER.

CHAP. XXVII.

GLANCE AT THE BRUMAL ASPECT OF NATURE—THE MOSSES IN THEIR NUPTIAL HABILIMENTS—SIMILE IN RELATION TO THEM—THEIR BOTANICAL CHARACTERS—BEAUTIFUL ASPECT IN THE WANK OF THE YEAR—POLYTRICHUM, AND OTHER FAMILIES—THE SPHAGNA OR BOG-MOSSES—THEIR ECONOMICAL HISTORY AND DISTRIBUTION.

“ When on the barn’s thatch’d roof is seen
The *Moss* in tufts of liveliest green,
When Roger to the wood-pile goes,
And, as he turns, his fingers blows,
When all around is dark and drear,
Be sure that CHRISTMAS-TIDE is near.”

Christmas, a Masque for the Fireside.

“ ankle deep in moss.”

COWPER.

IF we felt disposed for a lounge upon the sofa at this chill and vapoury season, instead of keeping a good “look-out” to the end of the chapter, we might now abruptly drop the curtain upon all further research, by exclaiming with Thomson—

“ How dead the vegetable kingdom lies.”

But though poets, with a superficial glance, may make such an exclamation, the botanist can by no means allow the strict application of such language to be

correct; for if the umbrageous multitude of leaves that lately decorated the forest have fallen to the ground, yet there are a host of "little plants that lowly dwell,"* that far from being dead, take advantage of the prevailing humidity to put forth their frondage and fruit, and assume a visible importance they made no pretensions to before—among these, shining with brilliant viridescence as *signs of approaching Christmas*, the beautiful tribe of Mosses appear, called in botanical language *Musci frondosi*. Even in summer, the wanderer who has penetrated into the deep recesses of the woods, seeking shelter from the burning refulgence of noon, has oft blessed that mossy carpet softer than velvet yielding to his tread, which has cooled and refreshed his tired feet. The mountain rambler, wearied with the toil of escalading slippery barren rocks, parched and burning with reflected heat, turns from his path along the dry ravine to where the plashy springlet oozing from its mossy bed diffuses around its green cradle delicious coolness, and invites to mental and bodily tranquillity within its sequestered recess. Then even the uninquisitive poet looks out for his "*mossy cell*," and, though shrinking from botanical initiation, still exclaims with Shenstone—

"Beside some fountain's *mossy* brink,
With me the muse shall sit and think."

But he should be dragged to the "*moss-fringed stone*" in winter, to behold this fairy tribe in all their delicacy and beauty, and Spenser, indeed, has not altogether forgotten the picturesque aspect they put on

* Spenser.

at this season, when he thus apostrophizes in his characteristic "Shepherd's Calendar:"—

"You naked trees, whose shady leaves are lost,
Wherein the birds were wont to build their bowre,
And now are *cloth'd with Moss* and hoary frost,
Instead of blossoms, wherewith your buds did flowre;
I see your tears that from your boughs do rain,
Whose drops in dreerie ysicles remain."

Linnaeus's vivid description of the Mosses, penned with his usual imaginative power, has never yet been surpassed. "When," says he, "all things around us languish and sleep, when the streams are frozen, the groves silent, the fields hidden with a covering of snow, and sorrow every where apparent, as the face of nature is pale and sad with the image of death; then the Mosses present themselves amidst the ruins of vegetation, and mantle the stones and rocks with a silky vesture glowing with the brightest colours."

The most incurious observer must have noticed that as the pale descending year hastens to its conclusion, the roof of almost every thatched shed, barn, or outhouse, assumes the most vivid green colour from the various *Mosses* that have domiciled upon its slopes; every wall top glistens with their brown or yellow seed-vessels and purple stalks, while the driest tiles, stones, or bricks, are dotted with the grey cushion-like tufts of the little *Grimmia pulvinata*, whose capsules or *thecæ* are buried amidst the leaves that rise up, each furnished with a long white pellucid hair. In hot weather the Mosses become crisped, curled up, discoloured, and apparently lifeless; but they imbibe moisture with such rapidity, that the

slightest shower restores their pristine freshness—thus emblematical of the power the slightest change of circumstances has upon the condition of man himself. See the son of genius toiling on his up-hill course, and vainly craving that single drop of patronage that would invigorate all his powers; but it is denied him, and like the parched moss he shrinks into obscurity and neglect. But should the golden shower fall at last, how suddenly he starts up into activity and fame—drinks up unsated the vivifying stream, expands all his latent powers, and at a single bound overleaps the unpitied wrongs of years, just as the parched moss rises from its long sleep, to sprout and fructify amidst the teeming moisture.

Mosses are not furnished with conspicuous flowers, but they are said to be *in fruit* when certain brown cases appear among them analogous to the capsules of the phanerogamous tribes, and generally elevated on long stalks. These cases are called *thecæ* or urns; their summit is crowned with a *calyptra* or veil, which covered the theca entirely before the latter lengthened, tore the calyptra from its support, and bore it upon the tip. When the calyptra has dropped off, the urn is seen closed at its mouth by an *opercula* or lid, and as the whole becomes mature the lid drops off, disclosing in most cases an elegant *peristome* or fringe, often double, which protects the mouth of the theca, and the teeth of this fringe varies in number from four to sixty-four, but in all cases is some multiple of *four*. When at last the minute *sporules* or seeds within the urn are fully ripe, the fringe withdraws itself, becomes reflex, and allows them to escape into air to be borne

upon the wind to rise up as young plants wherever Nature may require their services. But besides the fruit that every kind of moss exhibits, some species bear leaves spread into a starry form, among which lie a number of cylindrical whitish-green bodies, transparent at the point, and filled with a cloudy granular matter. These have been considered as *anthers* by some botanists, while the cluster of greenish pipe-like filaments that precedes the appearance of the thecæ were described as *pistils*. Sprengel, however, overturns this opinion by stating that he has seen the supposed anthers drop off, and strike root like *gemmae*, or off-set buds, which he supposes they are ; still it is remarkable that the star-bearing plants never produce urns, nor the urn-bearing stars. Lindley considers that the *calyptra*, *operculum*, and teeth of the *peristome* of mosses are all modified leaves, and that therefore the urn is more analogous to a *flower* than a *seed-vessel*. However this may be, the urn at any rate contains the minute dust or sporules from which young plants germinate, and this has been proved by Mr. Drummond, who succeeded in raising more than thirty different kinds of mosses from seed. Mosses have been arranged in genera, according to the presence or absence of a fringe at the mouth of the urn, the number of its processes, and whether single or double. I shall here only advert to a few of the more remarkable, referring the enquirer to Hooker and Taylor's "*Muscologia Britannica*," where all the mosses of Britain are described, and many of them figured. According to Lindley, about eight hundred species are now known, but probably a considerable number remain to be described.

Whoever enters upon the study of these minute yet beautiful structures, must not imagine that his researches are to be confined wholly to the days of summer ; even now, when the sun, blazing for a moment on his eastern pillow, sinks oppressed amidst the rhimy vapours that spread on all sides from the dripping woods and saturated fields ; when the north-westers hurry amongst the creaking, splitting, and denuded boughs, scattering the last leaves upon the paths all slimy with moisture and rotten foliage ; when mud, sludge, mire, and puddle combine in the romantic rural lanes with ruts of depth profound, whose treacherous edges sink mid-knee deep at once in the vainly-attempted passage ; when it seems so cold as to ensure a frost, and yet so gloomy, foggy, and tempestuous, that the black wood already in idea echoes to the pealing rain, and the cawing crow is the only visible inhabitant of the eclipsed day—even as now, in these decembral hours of gloom, the *muscolo-gist* must be abroad to behold the objects of his delight in their perfection. Nor will it do merely to “look-out” in the shrubbery for a moment, and run in like a cat from the drip of the trees ;—the *mosses*, now in their brightest luxuriance, must be sought for on the spongy sward of the bleak extensive moor, or the “moss-clad stones” swept by the bitter mountain blast, or in the wildest depth of humid woods, midst

—————“Wither'd boughs grotesque,
Strip of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side.”*

* Wordsworth.

For had their oozy foliage and plumose stems, voices
to mingle with the weeping patter of the woodland
rill, truly might they sportive cry

“Where we are it is no place
For a lazy foot to trace;
Over heath and over field
He must scramble who would find us;
In the copse-wood close conceal’d,
With a running-brook behind us.”

Here we are, then, dash at once upon beds of silken
velvet *Hypni*; or the *Dicranum scoparium*, covering
the bank with its long pecteniform foliage, offers a
seat of unrivalled softness—a thousand moss-encrusted
stalwart forest arms form around us a labyrinth of dim
melancholy obscurity; so with the “hoary gown”
about us, we may at once *look* the character of the
hermit, whether of Milton, Parnell, or any other poet,
in strict keeping with the occupation allotted by Cole-
ridge in his “Ancient Mariner,” to the

“Hermit good, who lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.

* * * *

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a *cushion plump*;
It is the *moss that wholly hides*
The rotted old oak stump.”

Having thus, under the guise of botanical searching,
introduced our friends into this gloomy forest recess,
we might here inflict a long moralization with impu-
nity; but we shall imitate Nature in her beautiful
contrasts—like the luminous vapour’s march along the

mountain—and now exhibit a beam of brightness from a poet who was no botanist, but who, as a close observer of nature, images his love as a “a lovely little flower” in a cave, by which I presume he intended a beauteous moss, and, thus circumstanced, defies the “raging winter.” Tempted alike by the literal and the symbolical flower, let the neophyte resist the invitation I give him to search amongst the caves if he can !

“Without my love, not a’ the charms
O’ Paradise could yield me joy ;
But gie me Lucy in my arms,
And welcome Lapland’s dreary sky.

My cave would be a lover’s bower,
Though raging winter rent the air ;
And she *a lovely little flower*,
That I wad tent and shelter there.”*

One of the most beautiful of the mossy families, and very conspicuous in moist woods or on mountain sides, is *Polytrichum*, nearly all the members of which have golden-brown hairy *calyptra* or caps to their urns or capsules, which gives them a singularly splendid appearance, and hence the *P. commune*, the glory of our mossy woods, has been called Goldilocks. It is the largest of the tribe, and where it abounds, doormats, beesoms, and brooms are formed of its stems, and as furnishing bedding to the Laplanders it has been highly celebrated. With this specious family may be contrasted the genus *Phascum*, whose capsules scarcely equal the size of a pin’s-head, and without lid

* Burns.

or fringe, fade almost from unassisted vision ; or the curiously-minute and elegant *Gymnostomi*, without peristomes, one species of which Hasselquist found so abundantly on the walls of Jerusalem, that he considered it the "hyssop springing out of the wall" that Solomon was acquainted with. The *Tortulæ*, seen very frequently on walls, are distinguished by the spiral twisting of their thirty-two teeth, which gives to their capsules the appearance of so many little torches, from the bright yellow colour of the fringe. The *Encalypta* has its calyptra exactly fashioned like an extinguisher ; that of *Orthotrichum* like a fool's-cap studded with hairs : while the round fruit of *Bartramia pomiformis* deeply furrowed, is peculiarly elegant seen amidst its light green tufts on sandy rocks. Almost every one who has walked in woods where charcoal has been burned, or trees fallen, must have marked masses of little green fruit bundled together, with scarcely any foliage, luxuriating on the round bare plots, thus left by the woodmen. This is the *Funaria hygrometica*, a singular moss that delights in charred ground, which it is thus the first to gladden again with vegetation, often with a purple-stalked companion, *Didymodon purpureum*. The *Bryæ* are a very numerous tribe of the mosses, amongst which *B. ligulatum*, with its long tongue-shaped leaves and brown scales at the base of its stalks, presents the appearance of a miniature Palm ; while the reticulated leaves of *B. punctatum*, an inhabitant of marshy spots or mountainous rivulets, have a very beautiful appearance. The little *Bryum argenteum*, often seen on rocks or old roofs, is very palpable from its peculiar silvery

aspect. Every where on banks, old trunks of trees, walls, and in the deep recesses of shadowy woods, appear the wide-spreading, soft and flossy mosses belonging to the *Hypnum* tribe, distinguished by their double *Peristome*, each consisting of sixteen teeth, filiform processes being frequently placed between the segments of the inner fringe. There are sixty-seven British species of *Hypnum*.

The genus *Splachnum* presents some of the rarest and most beautiful species known in the world. *S. vasculosum*, with its globular rich brown shining capsules, is the queen of British Mosses, but she is only "at home" on Ben More and the Breadalbane mountains in Scotland, at three thousand feet elevation. But by far the most important in the economy of Nature are the *Sphagna*, or bog-mosses, whose hoary tresses clothe the misty mountains to such a vast extent, forming those turbaries within which the mightiest rivers are nursed in their flossy cradles, fed by the waters imbibed by them from the flying vapours, and gently led with flowing urns to the mouths of those ravines down which they plunge in foam and spray, hurrying along their loud-voiced waters to grace and fructify the plains beneath. What botanist is there whose heart does not bound within him at the recollection of those *bogs* upon whose margin or within whose plashy verge

"Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever,"—

he has gathered some of his brightest and most cherished varieties! There, whiter than snow, floats the silken Cotton-grass; the red-leaved Sundew shines

revealed upon the ermine moss on which it floats ; the delicate Rose-pimpernel almost immersed, just shows its roseate flowers ; and the Bog-violet (*Viola palustris*), or the fringed petals of the lovely *Menyanthes*, charm the gazing eye amidst a host of delicate Carices. But the bog-moss itself is beautiful, in its several varieties—of a lurid green as it floats in the water, pure white on the edges and surface of the morass above which the screaming plover wheels, and of a beautiful rose-colour when the moisture has altogether left it. Ah ! how often have my wandering feet trod delighted on the soft snowy bog-moss—on the blue-topt Wrekin where I first gathered among it the blue greasy-leaved *Pinguicula*—on the western descent of oft-visited Malvern—mixed with the lowly Cranberry on the borders of Bomere's fair watery expanse—with the fairy ivy-leaved Bell-flower on the margin of Llyn Teivy and its sister lakes—where Gowrog's lonely pool and gray stones, near St. David's, receives amidst its barren wildness a few stray shreds of beauty from the golden corolls of the *Hypericum elodes*, and the silver flowers of the floating *Alisma natans*, amidst its dreary marshy waste—on the black morasses of Cardigan, wedded to the beauteous pink-flowered *Andromeda*—on the shores of Pembroke, lulled by the murmur of the sea amidst the fragrance of bushes of Wild Myrtle—or

“ Amid the heart of many thousand mists,”

where the young Severn frets timorously in silver lines shrouded in the scowling passes of drear Plinlimmon, hid in perpetual clouds, and blown by never-ceasing blasts.

The destruction and renovation perpetually taking place throughout nature is apparent in the history of the Mosses. An old decrepid forest becomes decayed, moss-grown, and is at last overthrown by the winds. The rains fall upon its remains, and they are covered and obscured by standing water. Here the *Sphagnum* or Bog-moss begins to vegetate—the waters are by degrees absorbed, and a peat-moss is formed, from whence the black half-decayed mosses are dug out, dried, and used for fuel. Thus the bog-moss becomes the instrument of its own destruction, it forms a pabulum for other plants and flowers to grow in, and at last, by the operation of draining, is converted into fruitful meadow land, or again waves with forest-trees as it did hundreds of years before.

Wherever the atmosphere is moist, there *Mosses* grow in every part of the world, though more common in temperate than tropical climates. They are the first vegetation that begin to dot any new soil with verdure; careless of snow or rain they push out their leaves and capsules in the most tempestuous weather, and even treasure in the former as materials for fresh soil, the sandy or quartz particles brought down with the rain. They plunge into the deepest ravines, forming those “shaggy banks,” which are the delight of sylvan wanderers; they rise upon the alps of Germany and Switzerland to the height of 5,500 feet, and amidst the eternal snows of Spitzbergen or New South Shetland, are still seen struggling for existence. Trifling and insignificant as they seem, they have many uses in Nature’s

economy ;* the birds construct their nests of them, they protect the roots of larger plants from cold, and preserve, amidst their dense tufts, myriads of minute insects, without which provision, doubtless, many birds would perish in the winter months. Everywhere, moors, woods, rocks, fields, and the banks of streams and marshes abound with them, so that they in fact constitute no mean portion of the vegetable clothing of the globe. "It is this universality of the mosses," observe the authors of '*Muscologia Britannica*,' this disposition of them to grow everywhere, even in such spots as are incapable of producing any other plants, that has much contributed towards making their study a favourite occupation with us. Upon the summits of our highest native mountains,—upon the most lofty alps of Switzerland, and the still more elevated ones of Savoy and Piedmont,—upon the morasses and volcanic tracts of Iceland,—have we received amusement and instruction, though the inexperienced eye could discover nothing more than seemingly barren wastes. Nor is the pursuit of these vegetables confined to the

*"God and nature," says Linnæus, in his *Acad. Amæn.*, "have made nothing in vain; and posterity may discover as much in *Mosses*, as of utility in other herbs." Mosses are doubtless the great ministering assistants of nature in the creation of *soil*, the constituents of which they imbibe from the atmosphere, and accumulate in masses about their roots, thus in a short time forming a nidus for larger plants even upon the barest rocks. This may be easily tested by any careful observer. In March, 1842, I took from the tiled roof of an out-building at Malvern Wells, a tuft of the *Bryum capillare*, a moss very common on walls and rocks. This tuft, with the black soil collected at its base, weighed *six ounces*, and on carefully extracting the mould by repeated washings, the actual vegetation that remained did not amount in weight to *one ounce*—the moss having thus, on a bare surface of tile, upon which it had been cast by wind or rain, not only subsisted itself, but amassed by its retentive qualities a rich *humus* above five times its own weight.

summer season alone, as is the case with most other departments of botany. The Muscologist needs not to wait for the heralds of Spring to announce to him the time when he may set out, with a prospect of success, upon *his* excursions. With the Moss it is a continual spring; a very great number of them are in the highest state of perfection in the middle of winter, and there is no season but will afford some or other of them in a state for examination and study. A great advantage in the study of Mosses is that they are more easily preserved, always continue green and beautiful, and may be at any time revived on the application of water. Thus they appear to the eye as beautiful images of the past, yet like an unappropriated thought, standing ever ready to be developed into the active and sensible present. They are, in fact, what the Amaranth was only fabled to be—imperishable!

WILD FLOWERS OF DECEMBER,

CONTINUED.

CHAP. XXVIII.

LAST LOOK-OUT UPON THE ASPECT OF VEGETATION—
APPEARANCE AND ECONOMY OF THE JUNGERMANNIÆ
—A DECEMBER MORNING—SIMILIES APPERTAINING
TO LINGERING FLOWERS—EVERGREENS OF THE SEA-
SON—CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS—“GIVE ME THOSE
FLOWERS.”

“Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign.” *Thomson.*

“Bring the last December rose
Frosted o'er with wintry snows,
Let the fading petals fall,
O'er the year's funereal pall.

From the wood some oak-leaves bring,
That were green in early spring;
Scatter them about the bier
Of the now departing year.”

Christmas, a Masque.

THE “last December rose,” alluded to in the above lines, must of course be a Chinese, or monthly one, some of which continue blooming, trained against walls, windows, or trellis-work, even amidst falling snow;—but there will scarcely be one left by the last

day of the month. The "ruler of the inverted year," now makes steady progress—the meadows in early morn are white with hoar frost, destroying the last surviving plants and flowers that might have hoped to escape the storm; then, as the feeble rays of the sickly sun tell upon the crisp grass, rising vapours hang cowering upon the dank meadows, or gloomy arable enclosures, till dampness is condensed upon all created things, rain is precipitated upon the leafless groves in pealing torrents, muddy brooks pour their red rippling waters over the plain, and the swelled rivers break their bounds, and mournfully splash upon the bending hollow pollard willows, ranged in broken ranks upon their borders. The garden and shrubbery now presents its most desolate aspect, for rampant weeds struggle with the stalks of dead annuals; all are dying, or so intermingled with fallen foliage and wind-driven fragments, as to *appear* dead, and as yet, there is no evident symptoms of revivification—

"No mark of vegetable life is seen,
No bird to bird repeats the tuneful call,
Save the dark leaves of some tall evergreen,
Save the lone redbreast on the moss-girt wall."

And yet, as the rays of morning feebly strike upon the tall columnar forms of elm, or ash, or beech, or oak, which seem marbled with rings of white, or grey, yellow, or green, some faint traces still present themselves of continuous vegetation, though in a diminished form; and if the eye strictly scrutinizes these verdant tufts and mosaic markings on the various barks, a host of what at first sight appear to be minute

flowers, are seen rearing their tender forms from purplish brown imbricated fronds, or bidentated leaves of the tenderest green. These are the urns or capsules of the *Jungermannia*, a distinct race from the mosses, though closely allied to them in habit, which part into four divisions, scattering around their brown sporules of dust, intermixed with minute chain-like bodies, whose precise use has not hitherto been certainly defined.* The urns of the *Jungermannia* mature rapidly in damp weather, and some of them are elevated upon such transparent stalks, that they appear to simulate the Gordian worms often met with amidst their tiny foliage.

Bogs, mountains, and damp rivulet sides, are the habitation of the *Jungermannia*, where they flourish in perfection, and no doubt contribute, by their spongy retention of water, to form those chrystal-dropping fountains, that delight the eye and refresh the lips of the weary traveller, who pauses, half worn out with toil, amidst the dim overshadowing glens into which he has penetrated. Even the rocks on the sea shore are often covered with the armour-like foliage of these minute plants, which of a sombre purple, finely contrasts with the golden, or cream-coloured lichens amongst which they grow, thus contributing to the formation of those harmonious tints, that, painted on the sombre weather-worn brow of the impending maritime cliff, inspire glorious imaginings in the mind of the true worshipper of nature. Thus, nothing is made in vain;—and to behold in the dead of winter,

* In the Exploratory Notices for January I have mentioned what appears to me the purpose they are designed for.

these curious plants spreading their labyrinthal mazes profuse with auburn fairy urns about the dark boles of the patriarchal trees of the wood, unquestionably inspires admiration, and leads the contemplative mind to the consideration of that power whose eye never sleeps, and whose wonder-working finger is always tracing out some latent object, as if to extort astonishment and praise from the thoughtless and unenquiring. None of these plants are in the slightest degree hurtful, and many of them possess a peculiar fragrance, which makes the "fine-nosed herbalist" sensible of their presence, when he is perhaps about to cross the rustic bridge of some bubbling brook, chafing the round stones among which it gurgles, while perhaps, the blue kingfisher darts, like an arrow, across the water, to hide among the platted roots of the old alder; or, the yellow wagtail, quivers its bright-stained plumage on the little pebbles where the waters undulate with simmering bubbling. Of the lowly *Jungermanniæ*, above two hundred species have been enumerated; and as much labour and microscopic research must have been required to elucidate their history, the late professor Burnett, has justly observed, that "the study of these plants has forcibly struck me as being a more decided proof of a *disinterested love of science* than the investigation of other richer, and more directly rewarding tribes." At all events, if there be any thing worthy or exciting in the perusal of any production of *human* genius, it must be self-evident, that there is something still more worthy, more exciting, and of a purer nature too, in the investigation of even the minutest emanation from the

wisdom and energy of the *Divine* mind. With this sentiment, then, the botanist can satisfactorily answer any contemner, if such there be, of his exploring, innocent, and unambitious pursuit.

But, now for a final glance at the out-of-door aspect of the features of the waning year. For one brief day December glooms subside—lines of white stratified clouds are pillowed upon the horizon, and the sun spreads forth his beams from a cœrulean sky upon leafless groves, sullen hills made rusty with the faded brake, dull purple patches broken by the plough, and wide green commons, whose hundred brimfull pools without a weed upon the surface, gleam and sparkle in the shadowy landscape, where the rays shift and glance, and chase each other, as if exulting at their temporary emancipation from the deep dungeon of the rifted clouds. Some tracts, too, of vegetable beauty appear, where the *glossy ivy* has encased a lofty pear-tree, riven pollard willow, or—

“ the moss-grown oak,
Tenacious of its leaves of russet brown.”

The shrubbery, now, with spiry fir, dark pine, and graceful cypress, looks refreshing to the eye, mixed with the sienna-tinged foliage of the retentive beech, while high in air, the round bushy *mistletoe* once again exhibits its strange flaccid leaves, and white mirth-inspiring berries. Here and there the orange-coloured clustered berries of the bryony deck the hedge, and occasionally a deep-indented elder-tree, with neglected umbels streaming in the air like the raven tresses of some love-lorn and bewildered maniac

damsel. “*Peep, peep, peep,*” rings in the ear, should we approach the mossy edge of the dark frowning wood, from a troop of little long-tailed “*Mumruffins,*”^{*} following their leader in gliding order among the budding branches; and in spots like this, the wild *Clematis* or traveller’s joy, often clusters, with its white plumose seeds, as if all ready for a start at the *breaking-up*.

Sometimes, even in the unnoticed lap of the dying year, a few flowers of earth glisten before the almost unconscious eye. They are either too early or too late, and we take no note of them, for they fail to awaken our sympathies. They may be like, *they are like*—gifts to a dying man—success, when hope has died away, and cannot be awakened—like joys that might once have charmed us in fancy’s younger hours, they now only mock the deadened heart steeled by disappointment, and so encrusted by the rust of care, that imagination finds no pulse to throb to its appeal. The flowers of youth, the flowers of spring, *these* are worth possessing; they inspire hope, they promise joy, they picture love, they portray in their fragrance and lustre beauty and happiness; but the flowers of winter are like the dregs of the bowl: who cares to drink them?—age may indeed “play with flowers” in its second childhood, amidst misty and fitful gleams of memory, but like the spoiled magnet they *attract* no longer—the charm is gone, and no bright vision wakens up, inspired by their contact. To pluck an opening flower, to give or to offer it at the shrine of beauty, might once have thrilled the soul to extacy; but, from the shrivelled and benumbed hand of age,

^{*} The Long-tailed Tit.—(*Parus caudatus*.)

who cares to pluck a flower, or who exists to deem it worth while to present one—take them away! Yet stop;—affection, duty, claims one sad wreath for the pallid corpse, ere buried with all its “dreams of greatness” in the cold earth; and even the lapse of time demands the the tribute of a sigh. So will we again chime in with the motto we have selected from a forgotten brochure of our own, as a chorus to this requiem:—

“Bring the last December rose
Frosted o’er with wintry snows,
Let the fading petals fall.
O’er the year’s funereal pall.

From the wood some oak-leaves bring
That were green in early spring,
Scatter them about the bier
Of the now departing year.”

Notwithstanding all the desolation that may be pictured or imagined to exist out-of-doors, it is not, however, to be forgotten that

“The love-lit winter home,”

has peculiar charms at this period, and fortunately the “Botanical Looker-Out,” is licensed to glance at, if not to mingle in, the pleasures of the season, when he looks round and sees the market-place overspread with glistening broad-leaved *laurel*; tortuous *ivy*, glossy-leaved and black-berried; *holly*, glorious, secure, and long-enduring, with its curling spinous leaves, and thick-clustered scarlet berries; and boy after boy, laden and overwhelmed beneath the weight

of toppling bushes of white-berried *mistletoe*. Still, then, old customs endure ; there is a demand now for *evergreens* at this season, as there ever has been, from the days of the sylvan Druids, downwards—aye, and “in the old times before them ;” and yet, strange to say, this poetical clinging to old observances remains only in the middle, or, indeed, more exclusively, in the lower classes of society. Perhaps the “Botanic Garden,” or the “Botanical Register,” with their coloured plates, may adorn the drawing-rooms of the wealthy cultivators of science, the green-house bouquet sparkle in the china vase, or hyacinths stud the sideboard, in their coloured glasses : but the bright *holly*, the green *ivy*, and the white-berried *mistletoe*, with all their mirth-inspiring associations, are banished to the hall, the kitchen, and the cottage. Here, and in the song of the poet, they take their refuge ; and, as even the *symbol* of mirth and enjoyment, charms the mind, so the cottager, hoisting the old-remembered evergreens, fondly fancies, that at the name of *Christmas*, he is entitled to participate in that annual rejoicing, which he has been taught angelic bands once proclaimed to shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, and which, he, for his part, has no wish to forego.

“ Glad Christmas comes, and every hearth
 Makes room to give him welcome now ;
 E'en want will dry its tears in mirth,
 And crown him with a *holly* bough.

* * * * *

Each house is swept the day before,
 And windows stuck with evergreens ;
 The snow is besom'd from the door,
 And comfort crowns the cottage scenes.

Gilt *holly* with its thorny pricks,
And *yew*, and *box*, with berries small,
These deck the unus'd candlesticks,
And pictures hanging by the wall." *Clare.*

After all our looking-out, then, we must now look *in*; there the festal board, the cheerful fire, and the recollections of past enjoyments in the fields and woods, may reconcile us to our curtained pavilion; and the roar of the external storm, and the fierce patter of the rain, shall only heighten the luxurious felicity of our easy chair—for now, after many a thoughtful pace of wood and lawn, and many a struggle with the winds and clouds, by earliest dawn, at noon, and dusky eve, our "web is wove," and nought remains of leaf or flower, to tempt our further movements;—

"The fields that *lately* bloom'd and smil'd,
Are flowerless, desolate, and wild;
Cold as Despair's unceasing tears,
And silent as departed years."

Here, then, we pause, in accordance with the plans of Nature, prepared to renew our explorations at a future time; for let it be borne in mind, that the beauties of vegetable Creation can never be sufficiently investigated at one transient view. In this respect the wonder-working hand of Divine Providence is strikingly manifested to the botanist. Long as he may reside at any particular spot, he will always find some *fresh* plant, year after year, presenting itself to his notice, and, occasionally, so numerous will these strangers appear, that he will feel the greatest surprise that they could have escaped his observation before—and yet, strange to say, years may again elapse

before they present themselves, and, perhaps, in the same locality, never. Hence, as Kirby and Spence have well observed in remarking upon the local distribution of insects and their relation to plants, "sometimes it happens that only a single opportunity occurs in a man's life of seeing certain plants growing wild: such opportunities should never be neglected."* The Botanical Explorer will assent to the truth of this observation, which while it will stimulate him to study the laws relating to the dissemination of plants, will act as a hint never to neglect gathering an unknown plant the *first time* it is noticed, under the deceptive hope that a more favourable opportunity may occur. As one well authenticated fact is worth a hundred theories, so a curious observation, treasured in the memory, will, in all probability, be more likely to lead the mind to elaborate study and minute investigation, than the mere statement of the laws of vegetable organization laid down with dogmatical precision, or the enforcement of any peculiar system loaded with harsh verbiage, painful and annoying to the recollection. Hence I have rather aimed to direct the student's attention in the *first* instance to the fields of Nature in their novelty and beauty, implying the after *study* of those objects, rather than to turn to Nature after imbibing the systems of Man. Let us be *first pleased*, and then instructed. Yet to system we must turn at last, and as it is an object of importance in any study easily to ascertain the names of the objects that come under examination, let the student by all means take

* Kirby and Spence.—Introduct. to Entomology, Vol. iv. p. 507.

the Linnæan classification for his guide, the facility here given to naming plants being far greater than in any other, as respects the Phanerogamous tribes.*

On this point it is needless to dilate further, for although in the present day the "Natural System" has been lauded to the skies as the most philosophical method of ascertaining the properties and affinities of plants, while the Linnæan has been proposed to be only remembered as a system that has passed away, I do not hesitate to declare that the humble collecting Botanist, seeking chiefly for pleasure and delight, in continually coming upon "some little document of poetry in the blossomed hawthorn, the daisy, the cowslip, the primrose, or some other simple object that has received a supernatural value from the muse," †—must be contented with the simpler references and more practically useful appliances of the Linnæan.

Through the varied scenes of twelve months' storm and sunshine, we have ministered as a collector of floral bouquets of every iridean hue—say not, reader, with Horace, ‡ that such wreaths displease you. Like Ganymede, we have presented a cup teeming with nature's ambrosial and nectariferous sweets—and with the speed of Puck, we've winged the mazes of of the wood to seek the tiniest flowers for your service.

* Let it be remembered that I have no wish to *depreciate* the Natural System, which the professor and systematic botanist, with a life to devote to the subject, must necessarily study—but I think few can master its intricacies in the first instance without a sacrifice of time which every lover of vegetable nature has not to spare.

† Sketch Book.

‡ "Displacent nexæ philyra coronæ."—Horace, Carm. i. 38.

We have proffered our guidance by mountain, haunted stream, and sacred grove, wherever the adventurous foot might penetrate; and, bear us witness, neither sun, nor cloud, nor storm, nor flood, have stopped our course, or turned us from our purpose. We have plucked the roses together in the sunny bower, we have "babbled o' green fields," by the river's flowery brink, we have whispered instruction on the lonely shore, and (start not fair ones) we have murmured of love in the moon-lit hazel walk.—We ought, then, to be familiar; but just as we are so, the iron-tongue of time calls for our separation—the year is closing, and we are doomed to part! Yet, remember, the wreath we have gathered is a *perennial* one, that will revive month after month, in after years, like the undying moss at the touch of moisture, whenever it is applied to at the proper season. Thus, then, we may revive, in any future spring, fresh as the little Aconite in February, rising from the ground all green and gold. And even now, with all our leaves and all our flowers thus strung together in one wild scented coronal, may we in conclusion say—FORGET-US-NOT—and our little wreath shall be like the pearly *immortelles*—that adorn the vases of your marble mantels—it shall leave no stain behind it, whether it rest in your boudoirs or your libraries.

The subject may be appositely closed by depicting the feelings called forth in the mind of a floral enthusiast, by the sight of vernal flowers, when incapacitated from leaving the tainted atmosphere of a sick chamber—at such a time what emotions may not be created by the sight of—fresh Wild Flowers!

"GIVE ME THOSE FLOWERS." *

GIVE me those Flowers! I want to look
 Again at the face of creation;
 They'll tell me at least of the last walk I took
 To their favourite habitation;
 The scent of the air and the sound of the brook
 Comes with them to form an oblation.

Bring me those Flowers!—I wish'd to have gone
 Myself to the place of their flowering;
 Where oft I have notic'd the Blackcap upon
 The gold sallows in April's showering,
 While the voice of the Thrush was still echoed on
 From the hazle copse dripping and pouring.

Give me those Flowers! I want to cheer
 My eyes with the look of their springing;
 Bring them—I got them myself last year,
 By the brook while the wood-wren was singing,
 And the sound of the current came deep on my ear,
 As o'er the dark rocks it plung'd swinging.

Bring me those Flowers!—bring root and all,
 To give me their full perfection,
 That their opening petals may now recall
 The spring's joyous resurrection;
 Give me those Flowers—alas it is all
 The enjoyment of recollection.

For now though I see the uncheck'd clouds
 O'er the brilliant green meadows chacing,
 And the opening verdure tip all the woods,
 Old winter's dark horrors effacing,
 Disease has enthrall'd me with mantles and hoods,
 While I by the brook would be pacing.

* Shakspeare—in "Romeo and Juliet," and again in the
 "Winter's Tale."

Give me those Flowers!—oh bring at least

A Primrose, a Violet, a Daisy,
A Cowslip would be in itself a feast,
Or the Blue-bell or burnish'd Crazy—
Oh with life alone will their charms have ceas'd,
When the eye-ball sits fix'd and glazy.

Give me those Flowers!—that earthy smell

Seems pregnant with renovation;
Methinks I am roaming again in the dell
Where the fiery broom gilds the station;
And though brief the continuance of that fairy spell,
It affects the imagination.

Bring me those Flowers!—but with them bring

Not merely fair pictures fleeting,
But strength once more for the buoyant spring
To give the clouds of heav'n a greeting!
How sad to sit silent while all the woods ring,
With their concert the spirits cheating.

Those Flowers, those Flowers! life ebbs apace,

How few there are now remaining
That with me commenc'd life's joyous race,
With bright hopes our steps sustaining;—
The rose-buds are withered, yet thought displays
The old vase its old flowers containing.

Give me those Flowers!—my hand shall hold

The last sad token devoutly;
And when I am laid in my parent mould
With my father's dust about me,
I pray that above me some tree fresh and bold,
May rise to the world without me.

In holy shade, o'er my resting place,

In coolness and beauty extending;
No Yew, but a Lime in summer grace
Its sweets to the zephyr lending:—
Give me *those* flowers o'er my narrow space,
Birds, insects and streams their sounds blending.



Flowers! living Flowers! all fresh and fair,
 Far brighter than childhood glowing;
 Though quicker they fade—yet lay them there,
 The last sad remembrance bestowing;
 As visions of life they charm every where—
 The flowret alone is left growing.

FINIS.

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